

*Pres to H. Danney*

A

# POPULAR VIEW

OF

# HOMŒOPATHY.

BY THE

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RECTOR OF WICKWAR, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

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Mere prattle without practice. *Othello.*

Pigmæi Gigantum humeris impositi plus quam homines vident. *Burton.*

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## INTRODUCTION.

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I am exceedingly desirous of calling attention to a question of the greatest importance to the best interests of mankind, which has been neglected for many years, and will probably remain doubtful for many more unless the public insist on its being set at rest without delay. We all entertain the greatest possible respect for the medical Practitioners of our own country, and not without good reason: nor ought they to be mentioned without an expression of that respect. Excellent however as they unquestionably are, it is nevertheless rather too much to expect of them that they should voluntarily step forth to assure you that they have hitherto misunderstood their art, and treated their patients erroneously. We ourselves are startled at the very mention of such a thing. It seems to us impossible that those whose presence has so often been our consolation: to whose meritorious labours we have so often paid the humble but honest tribute of our admiration: whose career has been as honourable as their aim is noble: it seems impossible, I repeat, that these excellent men should have been all the while as mistaken as ourselves. The system of investigation which has been pursued from the time of Hippocrates; the "Baconian principles especially, on which medical science has of late years become firmly based in England;" (as they themselves express it) cannot surely be erroneous. The many great men who have dedicated their lives and talents to the study of the art of healing—who have ever shewn themselves such diligent observers, such honest enquirers, such fearless experimenters—who have so long and so zealously exerted their best energies of mind and body in the cause of suffering humanity—who have faced the most contagious plagues with the same indifference with which they

would prescribe for the gouty finger of a noble: men illustrious for science, eminent for sagacity, renowned for diligent research; the accumulated knowledge of many centuries, the records of the past, and the labours of the present — *all* cannot be wrong!

Nevertheless an opinion has been started — a bold one surely — but it is gaining ground — that such is the case. The propagators and advocates of that opinion affirm that there is a much shorter, safer, and better method of curing diseases than that which is at present practised; and any medical man, they assure us, may readily convince himself of the truth of their assertion. “If,” they say, (and one scarcely knows how to reply to them) “if those who reject our system would but be good enough to read and learn some little about it before they talk about it; if they would but hear before they pronounce, and try before they decide, we should have no objection to let the system rest altogether on their experiments; they are honourable men, and they can discriminate between what is real and what is merely specious; let them come forward, and by their experiments we are willing to abide.”

A fairer challenge could not possibly be given: it only remains so enquire whether the rank of the challengers will justify attention to it. For it is certainly by no means incumbent on men eminent for their scientific attainments as are our medical men, and fully occupied as they are in the labours of their profession, to give up their valuable time to investigate every idle appeal of this nature. They are too usefully employed already. It would be too much to expect such men to stoop from that pride of place to which their talents have raised them, to study and refute every whimsical theory and bold assertion to which crazed intellects or crafty speculation may give birth. They have other and nobler occupations than to expose the impudent forgeries of every shameless charlatan.

Circumstances nevertheless might possibly arise, which would render it incumbent on them for their own sakes, for

our sakes, for the sake of truth, to institute those experiments which are demanded. We may conceive a case in which neglect would be culpable, and protracted silence positively criminal. The number and character of its adherents are a fair criterion, not certainly of the truth, but of the importance of any new heresy; and while the frantic leader of half a dozen shouting boys may be contemptuously consigned to the constable and the stocks, it would seem wanton trifling to take no measures against the leader of armies, however unjustifiable his object, however bad his cause. There was, then, a time when no blame could be with justice imputed to the members of the medical profession in England, for not seeking out this new heresy of which we have been speaking, in order to refute the arguments and expose the fallacies by which it was supported. They left it to the contempt of the world: they left it to sparkle and expire with ten thousand other specious schemes of which no trace remains. Be it so. The progeny of error are a numerous, but by no means a long-lived generation.

But it is now nearly six lustres\* that they have so left it unnoticed. And if in the course of those years, that despised heresy has struck root in the land of its birth as deep as if it had flourished ten centuries; if in spite of all opposition, and all argument, and all interests, it be spreading rapidly and steadily across the whole of the continent:\*\* if every week is signalized by some new conversion, and every day adds new adherents: if journals many in number are published, detailing cases of every species of disease triumphantly cured by its aid: if we constantly meet in those publications the frank avowal of some seceding medical Practitioner, whom the force of facts has compelled, against his will, to confess how completely erroneous is the ordinary system of medicine: if pro-

\* Homeopathy may be said to date from 1805, in which year Hahnemann published his experiments on twenty-seven medicinal substances.

\*\* Five years ago the very name of Homeopathy was unknown in France. Now the presses there teem with works on the subject.

fessorships are founded in foreign cities to publish and preach and teach the new doctrines: if hospitals are confided to the care and superintendence of the disciples: if the profane public, deaf to the logic and blind to the success of the old system, will besiege the doors of these disciples: if, in short, a vast and flourishing school of medicine on the new system is founded and making many proselytes: and lastly, if among the thousand cases of extraordinary, nay extravagant, cure related in their journals and scientific works, not one has ever been contradicted: if, in the fierce war of words which has been so long raging on the subject, no imputation of bad faith has yet given us cause to suspect the accuracy or fidelity of those reports; then indeed we cannot but allow that Homœopathy has assumed an attitude which challenges, and a rank which entitles it to attention even in this country. Investigation it demands: it ought to have received it long ago: it must and will receive it soon: it is too late to treat it with contempt. When the world is ringing with the echoes of strange cures, it is no longer a time to fold the arms and wear a placidly benignant smile, as if the whole gift of healing were confined to the Westminster Society, and all worth knowing on earth concentrated in the *Pharmacopœia Londinensis*. Equally useless is it to swagger and bluster, and “speak plain cannon, fire and smoke and bounce,” and denounce as pestilential fellows the Founder of it and all his adherents to the tenth generation. The curse of Ernulphus would not make truth withdraw a foot which she had once planted. Step back she will never, no not one fraction of an inch, though all Apothecaries’ Hall were to arm against her. With all submission therefore we conceive, that much more wisdom would lie in making at once the experiments which Homœopathy so loudly demands, than in venting indignation in great swarths of state words, or sending out the light horse of small jokes, or in arguing and debating for months and years together what a few trials would effectually determine.

Be that as it may however, if the medical men shall conceive it to be more consonant with their interests to forget Homœopathy, or more befitting their dignity to give no other reply to its advocates than abuse, we take leave to assure them, in all sincerity, that *we*, the public, shall neither do the one nor rest satisfied with the other. The truth or falsehood of a system like that does not in the least depend on the talents of its defenders. They may possibly be all that they are called, shallow, deluded, conceited persons, and yet what they maintain be not the less true. We are all very willing to submit our opinions to the better judgment of the medical men, if that judgment be founded on facts. But we are not by any means willing to adopt their forgetfulness, or to abandon a system which promises so largely as Homœopathy, merely because it is weakly defended, or proscribed by some who are even more ignorant of it than we ourselves are.

It may be proper to explain why so very humble an individual as the present writer has quitted a retirement which is suited to him, for a publicity which he does not covet, to occupy a station for which he is ill qualified.

It is, believe it, no slight sacrifice to abandon the habits of years, to exchange the tranquillity of private life for the rude jostling of polemics, to step forth from the lowly valley, above which the storms of this world sweep harmless, and almost unheard save in their distant reverberations, and to assume a position exposed to all the thunders of medical indignation. Small wisdom lies too in provoking a contest in which talents and numbers, stimulated by danger and united by interest, make common cause against one feeble assailant; in which defeat would bring no sympathy—success give no advantage; for if Homœopathy should turn out to be false, who would recollect the motives which induced him to bring it forward? if true, others would reap the whole profits. The soldier who leads the forlorn hope is rudely opposed by multitudinous adversaries whose station gives them every advantage over him

and even, should his party eventually gain the day, long before that event takes place, he is overborne and trodden down in the struggle, or indistinguishably blended in the mass of his triumphant comrades: while Fame, disdaining such mean crests, records the names of some of the more brilliant leaders, or passes on to bind one more laurel wreath around the brows of the oft-crowned hero of a hundred fights.

If then the writer was so well aware of the consequences, — if he knew how much was to be risked, how little gained, why did he leave an obscurity where none molested him? The reader will, perhaps, bear with him awhile, while he endeavours to explain that which some regret and others censure severely. Homœopathy is a subject which long ago attracted his attention sufficiently to induce him to make himself acquainted with its leading principles. There was no denying that much of it wore a semblance of ingenuity and plausibility; but it must also be confessed that part of it was very startling. There was in it such a complete defiance of all settled opinions and established maxims on the subject of healing; such a total disregard of all that had been taught in medicine for many centuries, and recognized and adopted by so many able men in even these days of practical improvement; it denounced so recklessly all that mankind had been accustomed to regard as axioms; in short, it shocked, and that so rudely, all preconceived notions, habits, and practice, that, ingenious as it undoubtedly was, he could not prevail upon his understanding to assent to it. It was thrown by, in consequence, for many months; nor was it until circumstances, which would interest no one, again forced it on his notice, that he could think of it otherwise than as one of those hardy but, nevertheless, dazzling speculations, in which the German mind seems to be peculiarly prolific. This time, however, he had no choice left him, whether to accept or reject it. It would be tedious, and, as his opinion could influence no one, it would be useless to detail the reasons he



had for altering his mind, and the train of circumstances which brought conviction with them. It will suffice to say, that, aware of the power of the imagination—aware of the extreme fallibility of human judgment—aware more especially of his own incompetency to decide, no precaution was neglected to avoid error. Having then, or, if you will, *fancying* that he had good reason to suppose that much suffering might be alleviated, by the aid of Homœopathy, which ordinary medicine cannot reach, he waited with considerable anxiety for the appearance of some work on the subject which might call public attention to a question of such vital importance. Week after week, month after month slid away, and nothing appeared. The columns of advertisements were eagerly perused; alas! they were filled with eulogies on quack medicines. The name of Homœopathy seemed almost unknown, excepting indeed to the authors of two or three silly Reviews,\* who wrote a little about that of which they had read less, and talked more nonsense than ought to have been admitted into ten times the quantity of matter.

This notice of Homœopathy is published by one who (as has been said) believes it to be capable of relieving much suffering of mind and body, at present pronounced incurable; it was published because the subject was neglected entirely by those who are alone capable of doing it justice,—because he has deemed it a solemn *duty* to his Maker and his fellow-countrymen, to task his slender abilities to the purpose of procuring it notice, in order that the question of its truth or falsehood may the sooner be settled. To this feeling of duty he has sacrificed every other. Had he consulted prudence, interest, comfort; had he listened to any of those anticipations of annoyance and vexation which could not but be suggested to his mind, his name had never been found among the advocates of a system whose Founder would long ago have

\* Vol. 50 of the Edinburgh Review, however, contains a very fair general outline of the principles of Homœopathy. But even there it is treated rather as a good joke than in a serious strain.

been crushed, if power could crush him;—whose followers have met with “war to the knife” wherever they showed themselves; and whose very humblest abettors would probably have found “the heaven that is over their heads to be brass, and the earth that is under them iron,” if human passions could have availed to “bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades.” England is of course not included in these remarks; yet, even here, if ever he dreamed of courtesy, he has been somewhat rudely awakened. Be that as it may, his only object is to call attention to the subject of Homœopathy, and to endeavour to force on those who, by their previous studies and habits of observation and long experience, are alone qualified to decide the question, an examination of a system which, if true, ought to be at once and universally adopted; if false, ought to be instantly (not *said*, but) *proved* to be so. Be Homœopathy right or wrong, it is, in either case, equally cruel not to settle the question for us by some decisive experiments.

He has been told, however, and that by some whose opinions he is bound to respect, that this is a purely medical question, in which no person not belonging to the Profession has any right to interfere. “The last and greatest exception,” as saith old Burton, “is, that I, being a divine, have meddled with physicke.”

“Tantum ne est ab re tua otii tibi  
Aliena ut cures, eaque nihil quæ ad te attinent.”

Have the public, then, really no interest in the question? Is there no other party but the Medicine-givers concerned in the success of medicine-taking? We have heard it said, “*Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Aehivi*,” or, in plain English, “if the doctor mistakes, the patient suffers.”—*Interfere?* What when the question has been left to the Profession for thirty years, and remains still undecided, unexamined, unthought of, have we no right to interfere? Are another score or so of years to be wasted, and are we to wait

reverently with bated breath and whispering humbleness until these great men shall graciously condescend to vouchsafe their attention spontaneously? Quousque tandem — How much longer is our patience to be abused?

With all deference to their better judgment, we beg to say, that we claim a right to protect our own interests, if our natural guardians neglect them. Yes, and moreover we will exercise that right, let who will forbid it. If blame does rest somewhere, it is surely not on those who have so long and so anxiously awaited the decision of men of science on a subject of such vital importance, and awaited it in silence.

But, after all, this objection is moonshine of the purest water. If the present writer had stepped forth to assert or to teach—to pull down or to set up—to judge and to decide, the objection might have had some force. But it is not so. He asks, and asks respectfully, of those who alone have power to answer the question, whether Homœopathy be what he learns in foreign journals that it is, and he gets abundant abuse by way of reply. He asks for bread and gets a stone, not given him, but thrown at his head. Now abuse is a species of argument which always implies a consciousness of weakness in him who uses it; and he is of course more convinced than ever of the truth of Homœopathy, and more desirous than ever that the question should be settled. Once more, therefore, he appears before the public, beseeching them to enforce and obtain inquiry. Homœopathy is either false or true. If false, let them not suffer it to spread; if true, let them not allow it to be swamped. Nothing but experiment can decide. If the members of the medical Profession have made those experiments, we have a right to call for them; if they have not, the more burning shame for them all, from the leader of the Profession to the lowest pupil in the hospital. The best recompense they can offer us for such neglect, is to institute them at once. We ask for no opinions—we want facts. We will not be satisfied with hearing Hahnemann and

his supporters called silly names, for we are able to do that ourselves if need were. Experiment we want—we want the system *tried*.

Alas! to criticise my style in the most florid oratory of Billingsgate is somewhat easier than to establish the falsehood of Homœopathy; possibly, also, somewhat more grateful than to establish its truth. The means of defence with which nature has provided animals are various. While some will meet an adversary boldly and fight him fairly, others decline the conflict altogether. But the Cuttle-fish, it is said, is furnished with a very ingenious contrivance of another sort: when pursued so closely that he has no other means of escape left, he discharges against the aggressor a cloud of black mud, under cover of which he eludes observation, while his disgusted adversary retires from a pursuit in which nothing is certain but that he would soil his fingers. I will vouch neither for the truth of the story, nor for the correctness of its application. But one thing I will vouch for—that, undeterred by anger or abuse, I will persevere in the endeavour to call the attention of the public to Homœopathy, until some one shall condescend to treat us with something better than mere invective. Personalities I leave with pleasure to those who do not think themselves degraded by using them. The object I have in view does not render it necessary to scold like an angry schoolboy, whose plum cake is in jeopardy; still less does it exact such a painful sacrifice as to compromise my own dignity by insulting a gentleman or calumniating an opponent.

It seems probable that this object would be more readily attained by showing that Homœopathy is not so totally absurd a thing as has been asserted; and that, whether true or false, it has in fact a show of reasoning about it which has never been fairly stated in this country. The system is strange—the name of it is new—the practice of it is unlike any thing we have been accustomed to: and the culpable silence of

medical men respecting it, has hitherto kept in the dark all who are not in the habit of seeing foreign journals. When, at length, after a lapse of time which ought to conjure a blush in cheeks unused to such a phenomenon, after an incessant struggle—after having won its way, foot by foot, and inch by inch, against all opposition, it has taken its station as a science; then, at last, a few pages in a periodical are perhaps dedicated to it. But even then we are not told of the progress it has made, or of the ground it occupies—we are not told of the facts on which it rests, or of the arguments by which it is supported. No one speaks of the almost miraculous cures it has wrought—no one mentions the hostility it has met with, and the converts it has made; or, that for a quarter of a century it has withstood the most violent efforts to extinguish it. Travestied off in the broadest caricature, it is announced as a sort of excellent joke—a thing perhaps of yesterday—an amusing instance of German credulity, and—English acuteness we are to suppose by implication. And thus, when at last it is known, seen only through the distorting medium of some Medical Review, it is regarded as something just dropped from the moon—a monstrous incarnation of mysticism—a strange title for a system, hit upon last week by a strange doctor, with a strange name, which has had the luck to obtain half a dozen crazed advocates and cure as many Hypochondriacs as did the rival system of Prince Hohenlohe.

It is to endeavour to set the subject before the British people in somewhat of its proper light; to give them some notion, however faint, of the principles of this science, and of the chain of reasoning on which those principles depend; to prove to them that if not true, it is at least not unlike truth: to convince them that if there be anything strange about it, it is strange to those only who have been little accustomed to see light thrown on the art of healing; that if there be novelty in it, it consists in the application of common sense to medical practice; it is for these purposes that these remarks are written.

It will not, however, I trust, be supposed that the truth of Homœopathy depends on any theoretical reasoning, still less in any the very minutest fraction of a degree on such feeble advocacy as any non-medical man can give to it. It has advanced steadily for one simple reason only, that it performed cures which nothing else could perform; and if it do not effect the same end here, all words will be as useless as they would be if it were attempted to reason the stars out of their courses. Nevertheless to make known some of the arguments in its favour may tend to familiarize the mind with it, and thus smooth the road for its progress, if it be destined to progress.

To apologize to the reader for the errors which have inevitably crept into the following pages is a duty which seems almost superfluous. Would that I could hope that with those errors enough truth is blended to awaken curiosity, and excite a thirst for draughts from the spring. In the *Organon*, in the *Materia Medica Pura*, and especially in the *Chronic Diseases*, and in the other writings of Hahnemann, the reader will find the pure fountain head of Homœopathy, unmuddied by the awkward attempts of us blunderers to guide little rills of it to plains which have been hitherto barren — May he “drink there and live;” — he will then pardon the errors of the work which first taught him the way to it. Whatever be the result, if the march of truth be in the slightest degree accelerated, my only aim is answered. To destroy the system of two thousand years, and build up in its room another and a better; to rise superior to follies and prejudices and faults, however specious, however venerable, however hallowed by the general acceptance of mankind; to shake off the heaped error of centuries as the awakening lion shakes off from his flanks the forest-leaves which have fallen on him in the night: this is the work of One on whom we cannot look without remembering how many years have passed away since there was a Giant on the earth. To us, the ordinary and diminutive race, it may

be permitted to scan and measure the trace of the mighty step  
beneath which so many old opinions are crumbling into  
nothing.

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Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning;  
One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;  
Turn giddy and be holp by backward turning,  
One desperate grief cures with another's languish.  
Take thou some new infection to thine eye,  
And the rank poison of the old will die.

*Romeo and Juliet.*

Before the curing of a strong disease,  
Even in the instant of repair and health  
The fit is strongest: evils that take leave  
On their departure most of all show evil.

*King John.*

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## CHAPTER I.

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Amidst the improvement which has of late years been introduced into almost every branch of human knowledge, it is not a little surprising to find the most important of all, the knowledge of the art of healing diseases, if not remaining stationary, yet at least making none of that progress to perfection which might have been anticipated. While the severer Philosophy of more modern days has been so indefatigably and so laudably engaged in sifting the grain from the chaff, and in most instances has rejected much that was worthless, — while experiment has everywhere else begun to assume the place of conjecture, and little been permitted to remain which did not rest on a firmer basis than hypothesis or assertion, — in the science of medicine, either the dogmas of schools still retain their authority, and where most caution in admitting any thing not rigorously and repeatedly proved was necessary, there least seems to have been used — or else \* “ medical men plagued themselves with wandering among theories and idle schemes,” grasping to-day without enquiry what was to be rejected to-morrow without reason. The kindred art of surgery indeed has made large and quick strides to perfection, so large as to leave little probably to be discovered by posterity, or desired by patients. The art of the physician meanwhile, the knowledge, that is of the properties of medicines, and the power they possess of healing diseases in the human body, seems to have remained almost unaffected by research. A few new medicines have been discovered, and some obtained by the aid of chemistry in a concentrated form; but little, comparatively with any other branch of human knowledge,

\* This is no assertion of mine, but quoted from the Medical Gazette. If it be true, it is no doubt very fair of the author to confess it; but it does not give one a very exalted idea of the “Baconian principles,” &c. of the science.



has been effected by the combined skill and perseverance which have been applied to the subject: disease baffles medical skill now as it did formerly, and pain remains unrelieved: and disease without remedy, and pain without relief are tolerable evidences that medical science has not reached perfection; and if so, the greater the talents which have been employed to improve it, the greater the probability that the path followed must have been a mistaken one, and that the principles adopted without previous investigation are erroneous.

However this may be denied by those on whom education and interest have combined to impose the belief that human intellects are incapable of admitting any more knowledge on the subject of medicine than has been already revealed to the members of the College of Physicians, there is one circumstance which ought not to be lost upon the profession, strongly corroborative as it is of what has been asserted. Let them but reflect on the infinite number and vast sale of quack medicines in this much-physicked country. Nothing is more painful than to read the advertisement of them. Every impudent and hungry knave who wishes to make money in the readiest manner possible, without the trouble of labouring for it, provided only that his assurance is greater than his conscience, has nothing to fear; it is but to put a flaming name to some bottle or box of deadly mixtures, and he is provided for for life. What is it to these merciless empirics if crowds die beneath their bottles? One remedy is coined and compounded as fast as another is exploded, and, big with fate, the sweltered venom is dispersed abroad to the four winds, carrying with it one only hope for the poor sufferer whom desperation drives to shut his eyes and swallow it, that if it does not cure it will kill.

In this system, what do the really amiable and benevolent, and scientific medical practitioners read, but that their art is in many instances unavailing. It is easy to attribute it to folly and ignorance, and to reprobate the extreme stupidity

which can encourage such a portentous and prodigious mischief. If the art of healing had improved as it ought to have done, men would soon have had the wit to find it out; if it approached any thing like certainty in its results, if people could get cured of their complaints completely, and surely, and easily, by the honourable and honest members of the profession, they would never defile their fingers even with the outside of those dark atrocities quack remedies. It is sheer despair — mere catching at straws. If ever the day shall dawn when the art of healing becomes what it ought to be, — an art whose results are not dubious, — that day will witness the expiring struggles of the worst Hydra that ever devastated a country. The uncertainty of cure is the parent of all these desperate expedients.

Amidst that uncertainty, however, there are a few instances wherein medicine is eminently successful. A few diseases which invariably appear attended with the same symptoms, are completely in the power of the medical attendant, who, employing the medicines which experience has taught him to be proper, triumphs over the disorder with ease and certainty. There is no doubting, no guessing, no hesitation, no compounding of drugs: the symptoms are declared, and the remedy is known at once. These cases are, as I mentioned, those only in which the symptoms are invariable: these remedies are called *Specifics*.

It does seem somewhat singular that the attention of the profession has been so little directed to these invaluable remedies. In almost every other branch of human knowledge the registration of facts has only led to the deduction and establishment of the laws by which those phenomena are regulated. Why should the phenomena of healing be the only exception? Why has it not been sought when and under what limitations medicines have the power of removing maladies? If nature acts invariably by certain fixed laws, why are not the laws of *specificity* discovered, as well as those of gravitation or of

motion? Is it not quite natural to expect that there are constant and fixed laws referring to the one as well as to the other? For more than two thousand years, however, the same system has been silently acquiesced in, nor was it until lately that any one thought of investigating a subject so full of importance to mankind.

Some years ago, however, the attention of a native of Meissen, in Saxony, who had been educated for the medical profession, was attracted to it, and led by some striking phenomena which appeared on his first essay with Cinchona, he determined to institute a series of experiments for the purpose of determining, if possible, first, whether there was in fact such a thing as a law of specificity, and secondly, if such turned out to be the case, to apply that law to the curative properties of all other medicines, so as to establish the case in which every other individual medicinal substance became a specific. It will be, at once, evident that the first step in such an extensive enquiry must be to determine with accuracy the peculiar properties of each individual medicament, those by which each was distinguished from every other; and, as the knowledge of the medical world on this subject was very defective, extending no farther than to some general properties which belonged to several in common, he determined first of all to discover, by actual experiment on himself, all the properties of those substances which acted as specifics, and next to continue those experiments carefully on other therapeutic agents.

It cannot be doubted that his sufferings during the course of this investigation, continued as it was for many years, must have been very great. Whatever they were, he bore them with a fortitude and perseverance which are more worthy of imitation than likely to find imitators, until, having with the greatest accuracy noted down every symptom which each medicament was capable of producing, he found himself in possession of a copious index, not merely to all the symptoms

which the various medicines he tried could produce in the human organism, but to nearly all those which morbid agents are capable of producing as well; that is to say, he had produced by some medicine or other symptoms corresponding to almost all those of natural maladies. He had been in the beginning struck with the singular resemblance between the symptoms caused by some specifics and the diseases which those specifics cured. He found that Peruvian bark excited a species of ague very similar to that which it cured; that mercury caused symptoms so like syphilitic ones as to be at times indistinguishable from them, &c. And suspecting that this similarity was the very principle by means of which the cure was affected, he had no sooner obtained a competent knowledge of the properties of different medicaments than he proceeded to apply that principle to the healing of diseases. The success of the experiment is said to have been complete. Had he been, indeed, what some have not blushed to call him, a Charlatan, he might have lived unassailed and died wealthy; but his noble nature spurned such contemptible inducements: with a splendid liberality which, we are proud to say, is by no means rare in the annals of medicine, he gave to the world at once the whole theory and practice of his art, and laid open every secret which it had cost him so many arduous hours of labour and years of suffering to discover. Let it not be forgotten when the name of Hahnemann is mentioned; neither let his reward be forgotten: obloquy, reproach, insult, and persecution. With no other object than to relieve suffering human nature, with no other means than patient study, with no other wish than to establish and extend the truth, above selfishness and beyond fear, he published all he had discovered; his requital, for a long time, was such treatment as he would have deserved if he had wasted his hours in devising means for increasing suffering, if he had lavished his talents in crushing truth, or occupied himself in disguising with hard names the errors of a system which had nothing but antiquity

to recommend it. Lucky it is for him, that he has another tribunal to appeal to, even posterity, who will adopt his discovery, if it turn out to be correct, or respect his motives, if time should fail to confirm it.

It must be evident at once that resting, as Hahnemann's system does, entirely on experiment, no argument can either establish or shake it. It may be very plausible and yet untrue, or it may be true, and yet our faculties not able fully to appreciate it. Nevertheless an attempt to explain the principles on which it is founded may possibly tend to procure it a trial from some who may have conceived unreasonable prejudices against it. In the following chapters, therefore, an attempt will be made to collect some arguments, which are scattered about in various parts of the writings of the illustrious Founder of it and his disciples, and thus to give a general outline of the reasoning by which it is supported. It will be almost superfluous to remark, that any attempt to concentrate those arguments in a less compass necessarily implies the omission of much that is valuable, even in the hands of one competent to undertake the duty. The reader need not be told, therefore, what he must be prepared for under present circumstances. There is one comfort, however, that when he does meet with errors, he will know at once to whom they are attributable, and not lay on the great Hahnemann the blame which belongs alone to the ignorance of one of his admirers.

## CHAPTER II.

Life, says Hahnemann, a thing completely *sui generis*, and known to us only by what we may call its effects, can never be made perceptible to our senses. We can gain no idea of its nature from metaphysical speculations, from conjectures, or references to principles and illustrations which serve to explain other phenomena. There exists no relation or analogy between the living body and an hydraulic engine, an electrical

machine, a galvanic battery. It does not obey the ordinary laws of nature which govern inorganic bodies. In the living organism there reigns a fundamental inherent force, which overcomes all the tendencies of matter, and, as it were, countermanding the obedience which the material frame would otherwise pay to the laws of matter, submits it, and all its particles, to its own individual influence. That principle can, for example, put the body in motion contrary to the law of motion, which determines that matter at rest shall continue at rest till acted on by some external force. Look again at a man suspending himself above the ground by holding a rope with his hands. Stop life in him, and instantly the hands relax their grasp, and the body falls at full length on the earth, in obedience to the law of gravitation, which life had suspended. This acting and energetic principle, which thus enables the body to disobey the ordinary laws of matter, is not material; it cannot be touched and handled; it is purely spiritual, or in ordinary phrase "dynamic."

When this mysterious principle is in full and vigorous operation, the organism is in that normal state which we call health: the body is strong and sound, the mind at ease; there are no appearances of discomfort or anxiety, no pain, and no sickness. But this principle is subjected to certain alterations, which communicated to the organism, cause in the man certain changes in his manner of feeling and acting. These changes, or aberrations from the normal state, we call disease. Resulting as they do from a change in the principle of life, they cannot be chemical, physical, or mechanical, but must be purely and entirely dynamic; a new state of existence in fact, which might a priori be expected to bring about a change in the construction of the material frame which is under its control. Change of structure, therefore, is not the cause of disease: it is rather a result of disease; it is, like every other aberration from the normal state of a sound mind in a sound body, a token that the principle of life, dynamic itself, is dynamically disturbed.

This principle of life is never disturbed without the individual feeling it, and that very feeling is what constitutes what is called a symptom. The quantity of disturbance of the principle of life is measured by the symptoms, and the whole therefore of what any individual complains of, the totality of the symptoms which betoken an innormal state of the vital power, indicate the disease with which that individual is afflicted; and inasmuch as every particular symptom is an external sign of a corresponding derangement in the principle of life, that principle is similarly deranged only in those cases where all the symptoms are identical, or, in other words, no two cases of disease are identical unless all the symptoms are identical.

If this be correct, the practice of classifying and arranging, under the same name, diseases whose symptoms are not identical, (as is done in ordinary nosology), must lead to erroneous conclusions. Every case \* of disease is an individual case rarely resembling any other in all its symptoms; even in prevailing epidemics, although some of the symptoms are the same in all cases, it is not often that any two persons are affected with precisely and exactly the same symptoms. And to seize on a few, or those of which the patient complains loudest, neglecting those which, though perhaps not equally prominent, are equally decided tokens of disturbance in the vital power, and to treat the patient as if the whole of his malady was confined to those few, is to commence an erroneous treatment on an erroneous principle. To collect those more prominent symptoms in a system of nosology, and give to certain sets of them fixed names as a reference by which the medical attendant is to be guided in any future cases where those sets shall be met with, omitting all notice of the minor but not less marked symptoms which individualize each case is to perpetuate that error as long, and to disseminate it as widely, as the reputation of the observer extends.

\* Excepting, as has been mentioned, certain invariable diseases, syphilis, &c.

The one and only aim of the physician is to restore to the normal state whatever has suffered disturbance; that is to say, to remove as far as possible every inconvenience of which his patient complains. With the occult and imperceptible changes which the organism undergoes in the progress of the malady he has nothing to do, excepting indeed as they are included in another branch of his art, surgery. The totality of the perceptible and appreciable changes are all that he has to consider; if he gets rid of them, he gets rid of disease as a matter of course, and when disease is eradicated, nothing but health can remain.

In order to effect this object, it has hitherto been the practice to enquire into the causes which have produced those changes in the manner of feeling and acting which we call disease, to the end that the cause being known, the effect might be removed. There is no doubt that treatment founded on this causal indication, would in all probability be effectual, provided only that the causes alluded to were\* appreciable by our senses. In the cases where they are so appreciable, those for example where some foreign substance has been introduced into the system, as sand into the eye, &c., by removing the substance which occasioned the symptoms, they will generally soon disappear themselves. But in by far the large majority of cases, the origin of disease is purely dynamic, a virtual disturbance of a principle purely spiritual, which cannot be submitted to our eyes and fingers.\*\* Telluric or atmospheric, electrical or galvanic influences, perhaps a change in

\* *L'homme ne connoit l'essence de rien, ni celle de la nature qu'il a sans cesse sous les yeux, ni celle du principe secret qui la vivifie. Il parle des causes qu'il se flatte d'avoir découvertes, et de celles qu'il se plaint de ne pouvoir découvrir; mais les vraies causes, les causes premières, il n'en connoit aucune; elles sont tout aussi cachées pour lui que l'essence des choses. Il voit des effets, ou plutôt il reçoit des sensations.*

Cabanis. Cited by Dufresne, Bib. Hom. vol. i. p. 41.

\*\*

A breath thou art  
Servile to all the skiey influences  
That dost this habitation where thou keep'st  
Hourly afflict,

said the most glorious genius that ever adorned the world.

If the causes of malady are ever to be discovered, they must probably be



the vibrations of that elastic medium which is supposed to fill space, or many other causes whose nature is far beyond the reach of our senses; act on the fine and subtle aura of life, and disturb its action; and while the causes are thus, not merely out of our power, but from the limited nature of our faculties beyond our perception; nothing can be more idle than to waste time in searching after that which cannot be apprehended, and if apprehended could not be controlled. Even in those cases where the cause is evident to our senses, we are utterly unable to appreciate its mode of action. We see for instance a lancet dipped in a pustule of the small pox. Minute as is the portion adhering to the blade, it is sufficient to conjure a storm in the strongest man which shall well nigh, if not totally, extinguish life. And yet for some days the action has been going on in the organism, without our having the faintest idea of the how or the why. In the endemic fevers of marshy countries, what do we know of the

sought in a different quarter, and by other means than have been hitherto employed. Although later times have very justly discarded many of the false notions formerly entertained, it is very questionable whether they have not in some instances discarded much truth as well. "*Pessime suis studiis consulunt* (says Thom. Bartholinus, as quoted in Duten's *Origine des deconvertes attribues aux Modernes*) *qui ita recentiorum (medicorum scilicet) scriptis se immergunt ut veteres vel negligent vel contemnunt, quum plerarumque rerum lux ex illis pendeat,*" &c. There was a time for instance when the moon was supposed to have much influence in causing disease. Now such a notion is reckoned among the fondest dreams of doting ignorance, and we are referred to some part of the body with a hard name for the cause. — Yet hear a man of some sense. "In the lowlands of tropical countries no attentive observer will fail to witness the power exercised by the moon over the seasons, and also over animal and vegetable nature.

Of the effects of the moon on animal life very many instances could be cited. I have seen in Africa the newly-littered young perish in a few hours at the mother's side, if exposed to the rays of the full moon; fish become rapidly putrid, and meat, if left exposed, incurable or un preservable by salt; the mariner heedlessly sleeping on the deck becoming afflicted with night-blindness; at times the face hideously swollen if exposed during sleep to the moon's rays; the maniac's paroxysms renewed with fearful vigour at the full and change, and the cold damp chill of the ague supervening on the ascendancy of this apparently mild, yet powerful luminary. Let her influence over this earth be studied, it is more powerful than is generally known."

*Martin's Hist. of the Brit. Colonies.*

Shakspeare alone forgot nothing — not even the *Virus Lunare*:

On the corner of the moon  
There hangs a vaporous drop profound,  
I'll catch it ere it come to ground.

cause, excepting that something arising from such marshes disturbs the normal state of the human organism, but its mode of action is quite hidden from us. How long is it again sometimes before a fever communicated by infection breaks out? and yet the seeds of it are lurking in the system, though we are utterly unable to discover or detect any thing of it, or even to perceive the occult changes which it must have introduced into the organism before the attack commences.

To refer maladies to the change of structure which attends them, or to changed secretions as their cause is almost puerile; it is to invert the whole matter and make a part of the disease be the cause of the disease. When a patient for instance suffering under various distressing symptoms applies for relief, and is told that an inflammation of the liver is the cause of his feelings, will not common sense teach him to say that the swelling of the liver is a part of the disease itself, and to ask what caused that swelling?

Inflammation, irritation, morbid secretions, and so on, what are they but signals and tokens that the vital power is disturbed in its action, flags of distress as it were, that the constitution hangs out for relief? And with just as great propriety might the pilot who has to bring a vessel into a place of safety out of the storm, attribute her sinking state to the inverted Jack at the mizen-peak, as the physician attribute the disease of the patient to one of these mere symptoms. When the pressure of the steam is increasing beyond what the strength of the boiler will endure, the balls of the governor fly apart, or the mercury rises in the attached barometer; but the engineer does not attribute to either of these phenomena the danger of the engine; he regards them as indices to an internal state requiring alteration, and he opens the valve which experience alone has taught him will answer the required end. It is but too probable indeed that much of the deplorable uncertainty of medicine is to be attributed to the persevering attempt to enquire into the causes of disease. Causal cure is

well enough in those cases where the cause is purely material and to be grasped in all its relations and dependencies by our faculties. But alas! for the mind of man when it has to do with spiritual essences! Placed in a universe of objects where every occurrence of every day of our lives is only not a miracle precisely because it *is* an every day occurrence, we see, feel, and think, and are not surprised at it, because we saw, felt, and thought yesterday. But in reality we can explain nothing, and of causation more especially we know nothing. — But one thing we can do — after having wearied ourselves with endeavouring to fathom the depths which He who placed us here never intended we should explore, we give names to certain phenomena, and fondly imagine that we have acquired knowledge because we have invented names. If those who with so much zeal have given up their time and talents to investigate the minutest change of structure in the dead body, with the hope of arriving at the knowledge of the *prima causa morbi*, had but bethought them that all such knowledge is in our present state of existence forbidden and impossible in every branch of science, it is probable that long ere this the art of medicine might have approached the mathematical sciences in the certainty of its results.\*

### CHAPTER III.

Disease being the result of a dynamic alteration in the organism, it is evident that there can but two modes of restoring health. The one is to remove every possible *known* cause which might tend to aggravate that alteration (unwholesome food, &c.), and leave the organism by its own inherent

\* Cette cause est inconnue, impossible à connoître; on la cherche en vain depuis deux mille ans, on la cherchera autant de tems encore, sans plus de succès: mais heureusement, on peut s'en passer: c'est l'affaire de la nature; et celle du Médecin est de connoître un remède qui l'anéantisse. — Bigel, vol. i. p. 110.

force to shake off the disease. And in acute cases, with the aid of certain evacuations, whose tendency is to relieve the organism for the time (bleeding, &c.), unless the attack be very severe, or the constitution very weak, it is undeniable that this, the *Vis Medicatrix Naturæ*, does effect restoration.

The other method is to employ substances, capable of producing changes and modifications of the organism, called medicines or medicaments. This method may fairly be stated to be the sole object of the art of medicine; for it will hardly be contended that much time need be dedicated to the study of bleeding and ordering a purgative medicine or an emetic. It will be granted, that inasmuch as medicaments have one and all the power of modifying and even producing vast changes in the organism, the greatest caution should be used in the administration of them. Gifted as they are with the faculty of affecting the health to an extent which we are in all probability not even yet fully aware of, no risk can be run in asserting that they should be employed only with the very greatest discrimination — that none should ever be exhibited excepting such as are adapted to the occasion, and those in the very smallest possible quantity which, not guess or belief, but *Experience* shall teach us, is necessary. To employ any unnecessary medicament, or any suitable one in needlessly large doses, is, to say the least of it, to produce changes in the organism without advantage, and to trifle egregiously with the most dangerous instruments. We shall possibly have occasion to refer to this subject again. Meanwhile we may safely lay down these general principles, which ought to be received into every system of medicine, whatever shall eventually be the fate of Homœopathy.

The removal of the symptoms of which a patient complains, with the least possible suffering, being the one and only object of the physician, and this removal being\* only to be effected by certain substances which Divine Providence has gifted

\* Excepting of course surgical cases, &c.

with certain properties of modifying the human organism, it is the duty of the physician, and ought to be the chief object of his education, to make himself intimately acquainted with the nature of those substances, — to ascertain all the \* pathogenic properties of each, — to determine rigorously wherein, and under what circumstances, it can affect the human organism, and to what extent; — in one word, to study with extreme diligence, so as to gain a precise and perfect knowledge of them, the individual \*\* virtues of each individual medicament before he ventures to administer them. He who prescribes a medicine before he knows the whole power it possesses of exciting disturbance in the organism, is as unfit to be trusted with such dangerous instruments as a boy who knows not the effects of gunpowder with a loaded gun. It cannot be too strongly impressed on the memory, that no medicament whatever *possesses any other power to relieve symptoms*, that is, to restore health, *than that which it possesses to excite symptoms*, that is, to produce illness. If it had not the power of disturbing health, it could not possibly cure disease. Whenever, therefore, an improper medicament is administered, or a proper one in improper quantities, disease or disturbance rather is excited by it, proportioned in intensity and duration to the size of the dose and the length of time the use of it has been continued. How much of the disease at present existing in the world has been produced by natural morbid causes; and how much resulted from the improper use of medicine, it might be difficult to determine. We cannot err, however, in asserting that every grain of medicine taken beyond what was necessary to effect a cure, has been productive of suffering, for which they who prescribed it are alone responsible. When we recollect the wasting deluge of drugs with which the uncertainty of the art of medicine has enabled every wretched Empirick to flood this country, the pocket-

\* Those by which it excites symptoms in the healthy.

\*\* By the word 'virtues' I mean, not simply curative properties, but every property of disturbing health.

book recipes, grandmother nostrums, family receipts, domestic formulæ, patent medicines, family medicine chests, and other perennial and inexhaustible fountains of mischief, the multitudinous compounds of modern pharmacy, the random mixtures, the multiplied bottles and boxes which, unlike Pandora's, have not even Hope at the bottom, and the utter recklessness in drug-swallowing, which has been confirmed, if not originally introduced, by the colossal doses prescribed by physicians, we cannot but believe that much of the suffering to be found in this island is due to the abuse of those very substances which a kind Creator has provided for man's restoration.

Regarding it then as a settled maxim, that a thorough and perfect knowledge of, and intimate acquaintance with the pathogenetic properties of every pharmaceutical agent is *essentially, indeed indispensably* necessary, to every individual who undertakes to restore the health of his afflicted fellow-creatures, it will be necessary to inquire next into the means at present existing to enable medical students to obtain that knowledge. "Three-and-twenty centuries," says Hahnemann, "have passed away in the endeavour to acquire it, and we are not now one step nearer it than we were then." \* Ignorant persons like ourselves are quite astounded at such an accusation. But the sage of Kœthen is no light authority. If his assertion be really true, if the care of health has been confided to men who were ignorant of the nature and properties of the substances they employed for that purpose, it is certainly high time that some of that light which of late years has been let in on every other branch of human inquiry, should at last penetrate even to the science of healing. "For," as the illustrious German truly observes, "in a question respecting the most important duty man can undertake in this world, the cure of his fellow-creature, an error is most deplorable." Whether such error do or do not exist it is as impossible, as it would be ridiculous, for us to decide. But we will endeavour to fol-

\* Mat. Med. Par.

low Hahnemann in the train of reasoning by which he endeavours to support his assertion.

Every medicament possesses, as has been already mentioned, two *apparently* distinct properties, according as it is administered to a healthy or diseased individual. In the first it is *pathogenetic*; that is, it disturbs the normal state of the organism, and gives rise to certain unpleasant feelings and sensations: in the other, if properly chosen, it is *therapeutic*; that is, it restores the patient to health. Now the second of these properties is entirely and altogether dependent on the first; that is to say, a medicament becomes a remedy only by the power it possesses of creating temporary disease. Setting aside all consideration of Homœopathy, it will be found that the same thing holds in every mode of treatment. Castor oil, for instance, can only benefit the patient by the power it possesses of creating a certain kind of disease in the bowels; an emetic, by its power of creating a temporary disease in the stomach; and so of all others. Whoever then would possess the perfect knowledge we have been speaking of, of the curative virtues of any medicament, ought as a matter of course to commence by studying accurately its pathogenetic properties; for the former are merely results of the latter: and to administer a medicine whose real or supposed curative properties alone are known, without at the same time regarding all its remaining properties, those of exciting disease, may be very injurious and cannot but be to use a two edged sword. And yet it is very singular that the therapeutic properties of medicaments, secondary to, and depending on the other entirely, as they are, have alone occupied the attention of medical practitioners, while the primary properties with which they are gifted, those by which they disturb health have been altogether neglected. Surely it was not unreasonable to expect that every property of every medicament, as far as the organism is concerned, would be known to every physician? Surely it was not too much to ask, that before men ventured to

prescribe any medicament for their fellow creature, they should have learnt accurately and exactly how far and in what way it was capable of acting on the organism of that fellow creature? And yet what are the sources from which the knowledge of the properties of medicaments is derived? They are such as can give not the very slightest insight into or acquaintance with the real powers of those medicaments. Little as is the space we have to spare, it may be worth our while to enquire shortly into the nature of those sources.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Halmemann asserts that there are four sources from which the existing *Materia Medica* has been derived. We will briefly touch on each one of those sources, although it certainly does appear that all of them are referrible to the last.

First of all, certain general therapeutic qualities are attributed to particular substances. One is still, as it was said to be in the time of Dioscorides, 1700 years ago, a diuretic; another a sudorific; a third an anodyne; a fourth an anti-spasmodic, &c. And supposing all this to be literally true, (which he asserts that it very rarely is when brought to the test of experiment,) what has been learnt excepting one property of each medicament? Nothing whatever is known of the action of any one on the rest of the organism — nothing of its special and peculiar power of affecting the rest of the frame — nothing of its influence and action on that part of the organism which is already affected, or on that which is not affected. Taken in large quantities, such and such a substance for instance is an anodyne. Thus much is supposed to be known, and it is prescribed and taken accordingly. A very desirable end, no doubt, to relieve pain! But who knows what symptoms of other kinds it is exciting all the while? Who knows what suffering it is preparing in return for the pain it has temporarily



extinguished ! If new symptoms follow the use of it, they are referred to the disease perhaps, or perhaps looked on as imaginary, and the patient declared to be affected with that curious complaint which baffles medicine, hypochondria !

The knowledge of the properties of some medicaments again is derived from their taste, smell, &c. One is bitter, and is pronounced to be tonic on that account ; and neglecting the various shades of bitter, of which there are so many, bitter medicines are decreed to have one mode of action on the organism, and tonics they are called, and tone they must accordingly give. It is hardly possible to conceive how eminent men should have ever yielded their assent, and lent the sanction of their names to such mere day-dreams, and contented themselves with these husks and peelings of knowledge on a subject so important.

Chemistry, in the third place, is summoned to the aid of the medical teacher, as if that had any thing to do with revealing the pathogenetic properties of medicaments. The object, the one only object is to discover what power each medicament possesses of affecting the human organism, and we are sent to the laboratory and the still for information. The active virtue that is sought is a mysterious property residing in the medicament, too subtle to be submitted to our view or touch, acting dynamically,—not *immediately* on the material frame, but on the principle of life, and by means of its agency on that principle producing in us sensations, — known to us in fact, and appreciable by us only by its effects ; and to send us to the still or the retort, and tell us of maceration and concentration, vegetable fibre, and albumen, extracts and essential-oils, is really a singular mode of proceeding in the eyes of an ignorant person. It would have saved trouble to have inscribed the names of the various medicinal substances on tickets, and balloted or drawn lots for properties for each. By this method, moreover, nobody would have been deluded.

The chief knowledge, however, which we possess of the

properties of medicaments has been drawn from observation of their effects on the organism while suffering under disease, *ab usu in morbis*. Undoubtedly with proper precautions a certain quantity of mere empirical knowledge might be collected from this source. We should not indeed err much, in all probability, if we were to assert that all the valuable and useful information which has been acquired on the subject of medicaments has been derived from this practical observation of their effects on patients; but that even this information must be very imperfect and open to much suspicion will be apparent from the following considerations.

The knowledge derived *ab usu in morbis*, would assume something of this form. "A certain disease was cured by a certain medicine, and therefore that medicine is a good remedy for that disease wherever it is met with." Supposing this to be literally true, before a *materia medica* could be thus constructed it would be necessary to try each individual medicament on each individual case of disease to discover which possessed the property of curing any particular one in the easiest and safest manner. How many centuries would elapse before this knowledge was exhausted, we can only guess from the number of centuries which have elapsed without leading to any thing like sound information on the subject; and even then, though specific remedies might eventually be discovered for specific diseases, there could by no possibility be any specifics discovered for the ordinary diseases of the world, those which are generic, and which never appear with exactly the same symptoms in any two individuals. A remedy might be hit on for the malady of one patient, and another patient be afflicted with what in books is described as the same disease but the symptoms being not the same precisely, it would by no means follow that the same remedy would be a specific for the second case.

But independently of the impossibility of discovering specific remedies by this mode of proceeding, supposing it were pos-

sible, nothing could ever be discovered of the pure pathogenetic properties of medicines by this mode — nothing of their powers in exciting as well as curing disease. We should be working in the dark with instruments we know little of, led by chance, perhaps, sometimes to the result we hoped for; and even in case we cured the original disorder, possibly doing more mischief than we did good, by exciting other diseases in the place of the one we had cured, — quelling one head of the hydra and giving life to others, — quenching fire in this place, kindling it in that.

But there is another source of uncertainty still remaining which must necessarily give rise to more confusion, and render it impossible to acquire any thing like accurate knowledge of the properties of medicaments. We have hitherto proceeded upon the supposition that each medicament was administered pure and single, and allowed to exhaust its action completely before another was permitted to interfere with it. Unfortunately this is not often the case. Not satisfied with administering one substance at one time, whose properties they are ignorant of, many compound and confound into one dose two, three, four or more, and thus from a mass, whose properties they could no more guess at, even if they were intimately acquainted with those of the simples, than a person who had never tried the effects of gunpowder could discover them from his knowledge of sulphur, nitre, and charcoal. And if the effect of the whole mass is known, how are the properties of any single member of the mighty combination to be guessed at in consequence! “Every virtue attributed to a medicament which has not been administered alone and without admixture with any other substance, and which consequently may be considered as almost unknown as to its mode of acting on the living organism is an illusion or a falsehood.”\* When so many different ingredients are thumped into one mass, why is it supposed that each will separate when

\* Hahnemann, *Mat. Med.*

it reaches the stomach, and proceed forthwith to execute the duty it was ordered to do? And if the effect of the compound should be beneficial, how is science benefited? Who can tell in any particular case of cure, to which of the medicaments the cure is to be attributed? Who can tell in that shower of grape which struck the disease? Strange it is that such mere guesswork, such blending and beating together of unknown individuals into an unknown mass should still be permitted by the many eminent men who adorn the noble profession of medicine. "De tout cet amas," said Montaigne, "ayant fait une mixture de breuvage, n'est-ce pas quelque espèce de rêverie d'espérer que ces vertus s'aillent divisant et triant de cette confusion et mélange pour courir à changes si diverses? Je craindrais infiniment qu'elles perdissent ou échangeassent leurs étiquettes et troublassent leurs quartiers."\* This was written two centuries ago. But it is nothing new for wisdom to cry in the streets unheard.

## CHAPTER V.

The illustrious founder of Homœopathy was too deep a thinker not to perceive very early in his career the nature of the sources from whence the knowledge of the properties of medicaments was derived, and too severe a reasoner to let the errors of the system founded on that knowledge escape him. Wild conjectures and still wilder assertions had usurped the place which ought to have been occupied by strict and rigorous experiments; the disputing school of Thessalus, the empirical school of Serapion, alike found followers; theory followed theory, and system replaced system, with as much facility as if the question had been about the colour of a coat or the fashion of a shoe-tie, instead of the health and life of man; century after century beheld new methods born and pass

\* *Archives de la Médecine Homœop. No. I. p. 57.*

away as their predecessors had done; Humorism was abandoned in favour of Solidism; Hoffmann retreated in his turn before Boerhaave, whose "system presents only a plausible conciliation of all conflicting hypotheses!" eclecticism vanished before Haller and irritability; and Brown revived the strictum and laxum of antiquity; learned doctors, giddy with the eternal revolution of systems, might one and all have exclaimed, with Faust: —

Da steh' ich nun, ich armer Zher!  
Und bin so klug als wie zuvor.

The medical world, like the crew of a leaky ship arguing about the cause and situation of the leak instead of pumping, was splitting metaphysical hairs instead of healing diseases; \* and amidst a chaos of contradictions nothing seemed permanent except the sufferings of the patients and the inability of the physician. Whether any thought of this nature was indistinctly glimmering in the mind of the friendless scholar, as, with twenty ducats, his whole fortune, in his pocket, he repaired to the university of his native country, to study medicine there, we cannot tell. But a few years only had elapsed before we find him renouncing a profession which bold theory and blind empiricism had divided between them, and devoting himself to the task of instituting a series of experiments of the nature and properties of the various substances which possess the power of acting on the human organism. Profoundly convinced that the science would never approach any tolerable degree of accuracy, until it was based neither on hypothesis nor on empiricism, but on a scientific investigation, on a complete and thorough examination into facts: and deeply struck with the reflection, that, before medicaments could be employed with any certainty, their true effects on the organism must be accurately known, he perceived, at the same time, that the source of all the uncertainty of medicine might be traced to the fact that almost all that was known of medi-

\* See Bigel, vol. i. and Edin. Rev. No. cx.

caments had been discovered by their effects on the sick alone. The various errors which must have sprung from that practice, the uncertainty thrown over the whole by compound prescriptions, and the many inappreciable perturbing causes which might influence the result did not escape him; and he saw that there was but one really scientific method of discovering all the properties of medicaments: and that was, to observe carefully and accurately all the effects, all the sensations and changes they produced, when administered to the healthy. A wide and untrodden field was before him; he felt, at once, that from the labours of his predecessors he could derive no assistance; abandoning, therefore, all the phantoms which had so long led science astray, he applied himself patiently and steadily to the execution of the gigantic task which he had set himself.

It is the fashion at present to smile calmly and assume a most gentlemanly and dignified air when the name of Hahnemann is mentioned. "Ah, he indeed!" says one, with the quietest self-satisfaction in the world; while another rejects, with a languid and contented grace, all notice of a subject which makes large demands on his patience; and a third, unable to appreciate doctrines which were not sucked in with his mother's milk, deems, that the best and easiest mode of settling the question, is, to decide upon it without the fatiguing labour of preliminary enquiry. If the lives and comforts of human beings were not at stake, it would be amusing to see how easy it is to pronounce on that of which one knows literally nothing: and to smother, as it were, with an emphatic wave of the hand, — thus, — the results of a patient investigation of many years' duration. It is not possible, however, but that full justice should eventually be done to the genius and labours of Hahnemann; seldom, indeed, has the world seen talents of a first rate order combined with so much unwearied diligence, accurate observation, patient endurance, and scrupulous adherence to facts. Had he, in the slightest

degree, resembled any of those gentlemen who are so good as to smile at his labours, the trumpet of self-praise would soon have interrupted the solitary exercises of the recluse, and a hastily-built theory would have been reared on two or three ill-conducted experiments. Luckily for mankind, his was a mind of a different order; for many years he submitted voluntarily to privations of every kind, a severe regimen, daily and often extremely painful sufferings caused by the repeated ingestion of small doses of very active poisons, that he might establish on a firm and lasting basis, without any admixture of gratuitous assertion or idle hypothesis, a *materia-medica* containing the pure pathogenetic properties of medicaments.

The principles which Hahnemann laid down for his guidance, in the construction of this vast monument of unrivaled genius and unparalleled endurance, were such as almost to preclude the possibility of even the slightest errors. All substances adapted to the use of the human body are either nutritious or medicinal: \* that is to say, they either furnish nourishment when taken into the stomach, or they excite symptoms. In the normal state of the human organism, that is, in the state of perfect and absolute health, without any derangement of the functions or any disturbance from dynamic causes, there would be no symptoms whatever; and if an individual in this state were kept cautiously out of the reach of every thing that could affect the mind or disturb the functions of the body, and fed on simple and natural food alone, without any admixture of anything medicinal; and if, to the individual so circumstanced, a simple medicinal substance were administered, every symptom which he experienced would be referrible to that medicine as its cause, and might be included among its pure pathogenetic properties. In all probability, however,

\* This is, perhaps, not strictly true. It is most probable that every substance has the power of exciting its own peculiar train of symptoms; cases have even been known where beef and mutton, milk and bread, when swallowed, caused disorder; but, in a perfectly healthy state, the symptoms excited by the pure and natural diet are either constant, or else, from habit, not felt.

there does not exist a single individual possessing such perfect and undisturbed health as not to be subject, at times, to certain unpleasant sensations. From the continued use of unwholesome diet, from the effects of accidents, from hereditary tendency, and other causes, it very rarely, if ever happens, that an individual can be found enjoying perfect health, uninterrupted by any unpleasant feelings whatever; but, if care be taken to select the healthiest that can be found, and all possible external causes of disturbance be scrupulously eliminated, the few symptoms of those individuals will be constant, while the circumstances of diet, &c., in which they are placed, remain constant. Proceeding on these principles, Hahnemann, and two or three friends,\* disposed to assist him in his labours, commenced on themselves a series of experiments, which lasted for more than twenty years; preparing themselves by the most scrupulous adherence to diet, which was merely nutritious and contained no element of disturbance, and previously noting every symptom to which each was liable; they swallowed in the morning, fasting, a small dose of the medicament to be experimented on, and, in case no symptoms manifested themselves, another in a few hours rather increased in quantity; all the consequent derangements of health were then observed in their slightest shades, and being entered in a journal kept for the purpose, were afterwards classified and arranged, and another set of experiments commenced with the same substance.

In order, however, to prevent any chance of error in a subject of so much importance, the following additional precautions were adopted by the sagacious originator of the system. In the first place it was absolutely necessary that the substances to be experimented on should be perfectly pure and simple, and in the possession of their fullest energies. Rejecting, therefore, extracts and infusions which had been prepared beforehand, the fresh juice of indigenous plants was expressed

\* Frantz, Hornburg, Stapf, &c.



and mixed with an equal quantity of alcohol: every care was also used to obtain foreign plants (which could, of course, only be procured dried,) in the greatest purity, entire, and unprepared.

In the next place, inasmuch as the action of the same substance varied according to the age, sex, and idiosyncrasy of the subject to whom it was administered, it was not considered sufficient to experiment on a few individuals. His own family were all pressed into the service, and each substance was tried in various doses, on many different persons, under every possible variety of circumstance, and beneath the immediate inspection of Hahnemann himself. The person experimented on was made to abstain cautiously from spices, green vegetables, fruit, &c. (Org. cxviii.) and to avoid all fatiguing labour of mind and body, all excesses, and every species of mental excitement. And if before the expiration of any experiment it happened that any extraordinary circumstance occurred, capable of modifying the result in the slightest degree — a fright, for example — any annoyance, or external injury or accident, or any departure from the severe regimen exacted, the symptoms were no longer noted — the experiment was at once broken off and recommenced. All symptoms, moreover, which were in the slightest degree doubtful were included in a parenthesis until further opportunity was afforded of establishing or rejecting them. When the action of the medicament was exhausted, the symptoms which had been regularly noted in a journal as they occurred, were classified, and copied off in the following order: — affections of the head, including vertigos of all species; headaches: disturbance of intelligence and memory; maladies of the forehead, eyes, nose, &c.; affections of the throat, &c.; of the lungs, heart, back, and limbs; then the general affections of the whole body, cutaneous eruptions, &c.; sleep, or want of sleep; cold and heat; anxiety; agitation; changes of character and disposition, and maladies of the mind.

Little need be said to prove the value of such a *Materia Medica* as Hahnemann thus constructed. Had he proceeded no farther — had he never founded on these experiments a new and splendid system of healing, they alone would have deserved the gratitude of mankind for ever. He would at least have put us in possession of accurate knowledge on a subject never treated on before, Pharmacodynamics. We should have known at any rate the full and proper effects of medicinal substances, and no longer have been compelled to see and to suffer men working in the dark with instruments whose powers they did not comprehend. But this is but a small part of his merits. He has led the way (and honour be to him for it!) to a better and sounder philosophy. He has given to investigation an impulse, of which no man can even guess at the ultimate consequences. He has taught us to base all our knowledge not in empiricism, but on pure experiment — to propose no shallow and misty theories — to rely on no vague and chimerical assertions — to assume nothing — to take nothing for granted, however slight or received — to admit nothing whatever that has not been repeatedly proved beyond the power of misrepresentation and the possibility of error — and to reject nothing that is asserted to be a fact, without due enquiry, merely because it may chance to disagree with our preconceived fancies; but in all humility to submit our shortsighted faculties to the best and greatest and only true teacher, *Experience*, in the full conviction that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy of even the Medical Gazette. A teacher whom many might consult with more advantage to themselves than they are likely to gain from “hearing their nothings monstered” in the pages of an ephemeral Review! A lesson that some would do well to learn, instead of speaking such an infinite deal of nothing, in which the reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall search all day ere you find them, and when you have them they are not worth the search.

## CHAPTER VI.

The *Materia Medica* thus constructed by Hahnemann and his disciples contained not only the pathogenetic properties of medicaments, but, as it turned out, a picture (almost completed already) of all the known affections of the organism to which mankind are subject. The next question was how to apply these properties to the cure of maladies arising from morbid causes.

Reverting to the axiom which was mentioned before that medicaments do not possess two actually distinct properties, one therapeutic and the other pathogenetic, but that they can only cure disease by the very same properties they possess of creating disease, it will be evident that there are but three modes in which they can possibly be employed to restore health.

One may be chosen which will excite in the healthy symptoms —

1. Bearing no relation to those of the disease to be treated — Allopathy.
2. Opposed to those of the disease — Enantiopathy.
3. Analogous to those of the disease — Homœopathy.

We will speak of each of these separately. There is, however, one preliminary observation which should be kept in mind.

If a lump of lead were let fall on a stone, the law of gravitation which caused it to fall would retain it in contact with the stone. But if a ball of glass were let fall on the same stone, it would not remain in contact with it, but would bound up with a force of restitution bearing to the force of compression a ratio of 15 : 16. nearly. That is to say, the elastic substance possesses in itself a property which when called into action opposes itself to, and enables the substance to resist for the time the ordinary laws of nature. This is a very imperfect illustration of the mode in which the living organism acts. It bears within it a principle which enables it to resist

all the ordinary laws of nature. It is possessed by a power called Life, which 'is a law to itself,' which enables the dust of the earth to remain erect in spite of gravity, which has a tendency to resist all external attack, which opposes itself to the influence of morbid causes, and strives to repel all that disturbs the harmony of the system.

But this is not all. If a steel-spring fixed at one end be pressed down by the finger, and then suddenly let go, the tendency of the spring to recover its proper place will carry it above the point from whence it was removed. This is another imperfect illustration of the mode in which the organism reacts against any external disturbance, and strives to recover its equilibrium. In the cases where a medicine has been administered, this reaction of the principle of life against all disturbing causes is called the secondary or consecutive effect of that medicine. An instance familiar to all is that of rhubarb. Taken in sufficient quantity it produces at first relaxation of the bowels; this is its primitive effect. Then comes the reaction of the organism, the property by which it not only resists change, but carries its effort at restoration, like the steel-spring, beyond the equilibrium, and the relaxation is succeeded by constipation. This is the consecutive effect. \*

Now, if it be true that medicaments possess no therapeutic properties whatever, excepting their pathogenetic ones, it follows as a strict and logical consequence, that the reaction of the organism is the only mode by which medicines can cure disease. They excite disease, and the organism is thus excited to reaction. They act on the principle of life, and in turn it is provoked to reject the attack, and restore its own natural healthy state. In fact, were it not for this property of reaction which the organism possesses, there could not be

\* The reaction of the living organism is familiar to all. Ask a barber how to make your hair grow, and he will bid you shave it off. Ask a gardener how to make an apple-tree push out vigorous shoots, and he will tell you to cut it back. In both these cases you do but stimulate the organism to reaction.

any possible means of recovering after an acute attack of disease; for the impression produced by the natural morbid cause would remain unchanged, and the patient would suffer all his life under the symptoms of the first disease with which he was attacked.

Keeping in mind then this indisputable fact, that restoration to health is solely owing to the reaction of the vital powers, which reaction may be produced or provoked by pathogenic agents, we will proceed to consider in turn the three cases mentioned above. And first, of that in which the medicine administered bears no relation to the disease in question, or Allopathy, as it is at present termed.

In Allopathic treatment, the medicine prescribed affects a different part of the organism from that which is already suffering, and the symptoms produced artificially have nothing in common with the previous morbid ones. An artificial disease, for example, is created in the bowels when the head is affected, and so on. Now if our premises were true, it certainly does not appear reasonable that this mode of practice should be effectual. There is no denying that if all that is wanting is to create a disease somewhere or other, it would be sufficient to administer the first drug at hand, without any consideration of its peculiar properties; if it excited symptoms, it would restore health as a matter of course, if allopathic treatment were the proper system. Whether this fortuitous chance-medley administration of medicines has ever been adopted or not, none can tell save those who preside over the mysteries of pill and draught; certainly, whatever might be the effect of such a practice, cure would not be numbered amongst them.

Right or wrong, however, Allopathy is the ordinary practice of the world, and has been so for so many years that it is quite interwoven with all our ideas of healing. And we are so full of preconceived notions on this subject, so accustomed to the usual system, that we must get rid of very much deep-

seated prejudice, before we can bring ourselves to regard it in its proper light. The world has, in the course of centuries, gradually become so accustomed to the administration of medicines, whose symptoms bear no relation whatever to those of the disease to be cured, that we have even accommodated our language to the practice. To take medicine means, in ordinary parlance, to excite a disease in the bowels; and physic,\* in its general acceptation, implies purging medicaments. The fact is that purging is, in most cases, not the simple pathogenetic property of the medicament by which it is caused, but a secondary effect of the organism which exerts itself violently to disembarass itself when excited by strong doses. This very obvious property was made use of, and as in acute cases to relieve the organism by abundant evacuations does, although at the expense of much suffering, relieve the disease, until it has exhausted the natural time of its duration; so it was adopted into general practice, and the science of medicine became, with some few exceptions, the science of purging and vomiting. „ La Saignée, l'Émétique, le Purgatif ont traversé les siècles pour arriver jusqu'à nous, qui saignons émétisons, et purgeons à l'égal des anciens, avec cette unique différence, que nous avons renchéri sur le premier de ces moyens, multiplié et varié jusqu'à la coquetterie les deux derniers. ”\*\*

As long as the notion is entertained that the cause of disease is material, so long it is quite natural that the art of healing should consist in the endeavour to get rid of this material cause by evacuations, so long we may expect to see attempts made to expel the morbid acrimonious matter by alvine evacuations, sudorifics, &c. But common sense ought to teach us that the appearance of acrid matter in the system can only be an effect and not a cause, and that to remove it can very little contribute to the cure of the other symptoms.

With regard to antipathic or enantiopathic practice, the ad-

\* Vid. Johnson.

\*\* Bigel. Examen. Vol. I. p. 22.

ministration, that is of medicaments whose effects are opposed to those of the disease, it seems at first sight much more reasonable than Allopathy. And so perhaps it would be if the organism were inert, and all the physician had to do was to produce a certain primitive effect by medicines. But the reaction of the organism seems to have totally escaped the recollection of the advocates of enanthiopathy. As long as the power exists which by its own energy rejects external and foreign impressions, so long the relief derived from enanthiopathy can only be temporary and palliative. In an acute case, if you could cover all the symptoms by some antipathic medicine, you might possibly by large doses of it destroy the morbid symptoms, until the disease had run its natural course. But then, as a matter of course, would ensue a convalescence proportioned to the strength and magnitude of the doses administered, and the patient would have to combat a medicinal disease, almost as bad as the natural one.

This has happened frequently in those cases of cholera which have been treated with opium and brandy. The antipathic medicines, administered in enormous doses, arrested the disease, and then the sufferer not unfrequently sunk under the remedy.

Palliation, however, and that merely temporary, is the utmost to be hoped for from antipathy in chronic diseases, and that for the very simple reason beforementioned, that each dose does but excite the organism anew to reaction, and thus the natural disease becomes rather aggravated than cured. The antagonistic principle restores the effect which a temporary artificial means had brought about. Let any one who is in the least sceptical on the subject, consult any eminent medical man, and request his advice as to the best means of curing chronic constipation of the bowels for instance. He will be told to attend carefully to diet, exercise, &c. but by no means to take much opening medicine. And why this caution? Because experience has taught him that in such cases purga-

tive medicines do only increase and aggravate the complaint instead of curing it. He knows moreover that the organism becomes accustomed to substances which are taken habitually, and that after long use of any medicine the doses must be increased to produce the same effect; convincing arguments that antipathy, excepting in acute cases, is not cure but mere palliation. \*

There remains then to be considered only Homœopathy, or that system in which medicines are administered whose effects on the healthy are analogous to those of the disease. Following Hahnemann's ingenious reasonings we will state, first of all, the two laws of nature on which he grounds his defence of it.

1. The affectibility of the living organism by natural morbid causes is incomparably weaker than by medicaments.

Every day, he says, and all day long the exciting causes of disease are acting on us, and yet, excepting under very peculiar circumstances, have no power to destroy the equilibrium and render us ill. The endemic fevers of marshy countries do not affect every one resident there. Even the plague and the cholera do not inevitably seize every individual who comes into contact with them. And in the most prevailing epidemic, "of two that are in a field, the one shall be taken and the other left." Indeed, were this not the case, were there not a conservative vital principle able to resist morbid causes, excepting under combinations of peculiar circumstances, no such thing as health could be known. Maladies, however, are exceptions to the natural and usual state of man, and it is

\* Disinclined as I am to advert to my own case, perhaps I may be permitted to mention the following beautiful instance of antagonistic action.

I had been for many years subject to a chronic stoppage of the nostrils, especially after dinner, accompanied with great dryness of the membrane lining the nose. The first effect of Homœopathic treatment was to aggravate the disease much. The consecutive effect was an abundant secretion of thin watery fluid, which fell in drops all the day. This continued for more than a month, gradually decreasing in quantity until it wholly ceased; since which time I have had no return whatever of the original complaint, though many months have elapsed, and before that time I can scarcely ever remember having passed a whole day without it.



only under certain circumstances and conditions both of the morbid power and human organism that disease can appear.

But every simple medicament acts under all circumstances, and at all times on the living body. Each one exercises its own peculiar and proper action: each one affects the organism in its own peculiar manner; but it requires no combinations of circumstances and conditions — it does so *invariably*. The conservative vital power may resist the influence of disease, but it must yield to the influence of a medicament. Medicinal powers have an *absolute* virtue to disturb the organism, — morbid powers only an occasional and conditional one.

This law being established, we proceed to the —

2. Of two dynamic affections, the stronger invariably extinguishes permanently the weaker, if both are of the same species.

It is abundantly clear that if the affections have no analogy, and are not of the same species, this law does not hold good. A complication of disorders may exist in the same patient at the same time; or in natural diseases which are dissimilar, the more violent may suspend the weaker for a while, and when it has exhausted its action, the old disease reappears. \* No one, whatever be his profession, can walk through this life with his eyes open, without seeing a violent attack of acute disease suspend for a while the chronic complaint which occupied the organism previously, and the chronic complaint reappear as soon as the other has run its course.

But it is not so when two diseases which affect the organism similarly and give birth to analogous symptoms, meet. The weaker is then replaced by the stronger, and permanently and completely extinguished. The examples of this given

\* Who has not repeatedly witnessed it? Who has not, for example, seen pregnancy (a constitutional disturbance, if not a disease) suspend phthisis, dropsy, &c.? But see that splendid piece of original and deep thought, the *Organon*. (§. xxx. &c.)

Und dieß geheimnißvolle Buch  
Ist dir es nicht Geleht genug?

in the Organon are many and convincing; and, in fact, it is an admitted thing that nature cannot sustain two similar diseases at the same time.

The consideration, then, of these two laws of nature should long ago have led to the true method of healing diseases. Nothing is requisite but to excite in the organism a disease similar to the one under which the patient is suffering, but stronger; the organism not being able to support two coterminously, the weaker one retires as a matter of course. It is obvious that to cure a natural disease by another analogous natural one, even if it were possible (which it is not excepting in very few instances,\*) would be merely to substitute a greater enemy for a less one. But there is this peculiarity attending medicinal diseases, that the organism is more roused into resistance by them: the antagonism of the principle of life is more developed by them, they are flung off more easily than natural ones. And as the *Materia Medica Pura* contains already most of the symptoms to which mankind are subject, as moreover each individual medicament does *always and invariably* excite its own peculiar symptoms on every patient previously affected with those symptoms, we are provided with a vast storehouse of artificial diseases from which the medical practitioner can at once draw forth the particular one containing the symptoms of the case before him, and by thus creating in the organism a purely artificial disease analogous to, and stronger than the natural one, the former, as a matter of course, following a fixed and invariable law, extinguishes the latter: and no sooner is the origin of the artificial disease removed by the patient ceasing to take medicine, than the organism summons into action its inherent force of restitution; the equilibrium is permanently and completely restored, and the patient having lost the morbid disease by the medicinal one, and the medicinal one by the reaction of the organism, is effectually and completely restored to the enjoyment of health.

\* Vaccination, for example, as a prophylactic, not as a cure.

Such is Homœopathy. \* Whatever may be thought of the arguments here used, it should be recollected that it owes its discovery to no a priori reasoning — it was not arrived at by first rearing an hypothesis, and then hunting for arguments to support it and twisting facts to establish it. It was the simple result of an investigation, of a painful, slow, laborious investigation into the causes and law of specificity. Hahnemann found that law to be a very simple one, and having established it by repeated and decisive experiments, he proclaimed the great truth, that there is a specific for every disorder in the medicament capable of exciting in the healthy symptoms analogous to those of that disorder. The arguments by which it has been attempted to shew that that law is reasonable and probable may or may not be correct. The fact remains, entirely independent of all reasoning upon it, that Homœopathy does furnish a complete and radical specific for diseases, chronic ones especially, which ordinary medicine cannot touch; diseases which are to the quack a fortune, but to the honourable and upright practitioner a source of deep and heartfelt sorrow.

For what noble mind but must mourn to see youth languishing, beauty fading, art exhausted, and amendment not even to be hoped? When ripe corn falls in its due season — when the sear leaves of autumn drop softly from the branches they no longer adorn; or when venerable age, called by his master and full of wisdom and of piety as of years, with duties done and destinies fulfilled, sets out on the journey which all mankind have to go; why this is nothing.

Let him pass — he hates him  
That would upon the rack of this tough world  
Stretch him out longer.

\* The theory of chronic diseases, beautiful as it is, must be omitted. But, is it not remarkable that when it has been so long known how one class of chronic diseases originated (secondary symptoms of syphilis driven in), analogy should never have led them to search for the origin of all chronic diseases in the repulsion of some similar miasm?

He who would acquire a clear conception of the reasons for the severe laws against those afflicted with leprosy, contained in the book of Leviticus, and of the real mercy of that severity, must read Hahnemann's Theory of

But when the hurricane falls on fields not yet "white for harvest;" when the cherished bud is rent from the stem ere the flower was expanded; when the lustrous laughing eye of childhood is quenched; when youth shuffles off this mortal coil, and hands that should have decked the bride-bed strew the grave; when tottering limbs and thin white hairs bend over the stiffened corse of manhood in his prime; when female loveliness is struck by lingering decay; when pain racks frames cast in nature's most kindest mood, and the damp of suffering stands day and night on foreheads of such a texture that one would rather wear chains till the iron galled to the very bone, than betem even the winds of heaven visit them too roughly; when the stored knowledge of centuries has been exhausted, the repositories of pharmaceutical lore ransacked, and all is found to be fanity, and the exclamation of the prophet may be read in the eyes if not heard from the lips of the physician, "O virgin daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines, for thou *shalt not be cured*;" then who does not feel come rushing over his soul a perfect conviction that kind heaven *has* furnished balm if man did but know all he might know? that

There *is* means;  
Many simples operative, whose power  
Will close the eye of anguish —  
Yea, blessed secrets,  
And yet *unpublished* virtues of the earth.

Let us indulge the hope that a few more years will see a change in this respect; and medicine become the science, not of treatment, but of cure; not of palliation, but of complete and perfect restoration.

To extend the term of human life beyond its prescribed limits would be of course as impracticable as to make the machine which is constantly at work endure for ever without wearing out. The Almighty Maker has fixed the period, and

Chronic Diseases, in which he ascribes most of the chronic sufferings of the world to that miasm which he terms psora.

creation can never furnish a medicine to postpone for one millionth part of a moment the inevitable point of time when it is decreed the silver cord shall be loosed. But when the movements of the steam-engine are irregular, when wheel grates against wheel, and the functions of the mighty combination are disturbed to such a degree, that if it be not speedily relieved, mischief must inevitably follow; the skilful engineer applies oil to that part of the intricate machine, which he knows to be in want of it; and the regularity of the whole system is at once restored. It is true he cannot replace a part which is once worn out, nor can he extend the existence of the engine beyond the time which the materials were made to last. But he can preserve its equilibrium unimpaired, and restore the harmony of its motion, if it has been accidentally deranged. And just thus far we may with all humility suppose that it is permitted to man to interfere in the motions of the human body. It is true God is the disposer of sickness; but He is the author of health as well. And however the knowledge of medical men may fall short of perfection, the pious christian will find it extremely difficult to believe that the same God who provided the means of redemption has permitted any disease without at the same time providing a remedy.\*

\* A few familiar instances of Homœopathic cure may be permitted.

When travelling in Lapland, some time ago, the face of my companion was frost-bitten most severely. We tried friction with a fur glove, but ineffectually, and at length were compelled to rub the affected cheek with snow. It was a severe operation out on a bare hill in a sharp wind, with the mercury sunk into the bulb; but it soon recovered the patient.

A few days ago a member of my own family had a considerable quantity of water in a state of ebullition poured over her hand; some brandy was instantly heated and applied to the scald in large quantities. The agony was intense for a few minutes; by the next morning there was no trace of the accident, excepting a slight redness of the back of the hand, which disappeared before night.

Who does not know that the best way to keep himself warm on the outside of a coach in a cold night is to drink, not hot spirits, but cold water?

Who does not know that hot tea, or hot spirits and water (in small quantities) is the most cooling draught there is when one comes in a strong perspiration from violent exercise?

But really all the world seem to have been long acquainted with Homœopathy in some instances. Ask the most common labourer how to cure a fit of sneezing, and he will tell you to take a pinch of snuff.

Let him, again, who is thirsty (unless his thirst be caused by salt) lay a

## CHAPTER VII.

Whatever may be thought of the doctrines of Homœopathy, and however opposed they may on a superficial glance appear to the generally received opinions of the world on the subject of healing, it is undeniable that the preparation and form of the medicaments of the new school have done more to repel adherents than any of its startling propositions. To people accustomed to boxes and bottles, to colossal doses of drams and scruples, to weigh out by the ounce sundry substances drawn from huge stores of multitudinous drugs, to mix and pound together and beat into one mass the omnigenous treasures of polypharmacy, there is in the idea of attempting to cure disease with a fraction of a grain of a simple and single medicament, so minute that imagination cannot follow the dispersion, and language scarcely find a name for it, something not merely ridiculous, but repulsive and almost criminal.

There is in this nothing but what is very natural. It is true that our knowledge of the laws and operations of nature is exceedingly limited. We may know that a few things *are*, but it is beyond our power to say that any thing *is not*. Confined, however, as is our knowledge, we can only reason from what we do know: and multiplied and repeated observation and experience can alone convince us of the truth of a system which seems to contradict all that mankind has so long and so universally admitted. Nor is this prejudice, or prepossession or whatever it may be called, altogether blameable. Without some such reverence for received opinions and established notions, we should be at the mercy of every hardy inventor of hypotheses and coiner of base metal schemes. To-morrow would upset what yesterday reared. We should be for ever afloat on a wide sea of conjecture, believing every thing and certain of nothing.

small portion of salt on his tongue, and it will be more serviceable than pints of water.

All these are domestic and vulgar instances of Homœopathic cure, which are practised every day and known to every body.

But while we are thus reluctant to admit what does not come down to us hallowed with the approbation of our predecessors, we must not at the same time forget that in every branch of human knowledge there is much room for improvement: that the human faculties are capable of acquiring more information than they have hitherto obtained, and that every succeeding generation will in all probability admit as acknowledged truths much which their forefathers would have classed among the merest dreams of a disturbed fancy. We ourselves have seen recognized as genuine many discoveries to which those who preceded us refused the "hall-mark." Newton was once regarded as a visionary. The inventor of the steam boat received no encouragement: and the application of coal gas to light the streets was rewarded with bankruptcy, a prison, and a broken heart.

Little people with little minds should remember who it was that compared himself to a boy straying along the shore and amusing himself with picking up here a shining pebble and there a shell somewhat prettier than usual, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him: they should reflect that another of a still loftier order than Newton has taught us, in "words that burn," that "proud man" is

Most *ignorant* of what he's most *assured*:

and that a third, the lightest dash of whose pen is worth all the other two ever wrote, hath told us, "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

Ordinary people should let such considerations as these teach them not to wed themselves with too much obstinacy to opinions which they have adopted for no better reason than because they were heir looms bequeathed to them by "their respectable grandmothers." Much that is venerable, much that is admirable, much that is most valuable, we have so acquired. But ancestral notions should be brought out and aired like ancestral dresses. The collector who scrupulously

retains all that is bestowed on him must necessarily retain much rubbish. And he who will not sift what his forefathers gleaned will probably be possessed of as much chaff as grain.

Discoveries have, in fact, so multiplied upon us in modern times that we have almost ceased to be surprised at them. Nor does there seem any reason to doubt that the career thus commenced will be persevered in until the stored wisdom of the world consist not in what *is supposed*, but in what *has been proved*. Whenever that period shall arrive, novelty will no longer be a sufficient ground for the rejection of a system which appeals to experience alone, and every day will teach men more impressively that their knowledge is in reality not quite so great as they have hitherto fancied it to be — and far, far less than their ignorance.

Very early in life the illustrious Hahnemann determined to fetter the wings of that far-reaching mind which would surely otherwise have spent its energies in vain. Pride and presumption, he saw, had led the world astray. A settled conviction of the extent of their knowledge was the besetting sin of all alike, and the great obstacle to their knowing more. Words passed current instead of precise ideas, and whoever knew the name which others applied to some effect was considered to have exhausted all that could be discovered on the subject. The real enlighteners of mankind, he found, were those who, digging to their foundations, had submitted their intellects to the long drudgery of investigation; who never dreamed that any thing was to be discovered by man without painful study and slow labour. He who would climb the ladder must do it step by step. The gateway to knowledge is low. He who would enter must stoop — the lower the safer — prostration in the dust is the surest means of all.

The mighty German bowed himself to the ground as he entered, and rose ere long by the margin of the fountains of light. As soon as he had acquired a perfect acquaintance with the pathogenetic properties of certain medicaments, he



did not delay to try on the sick the law of specificity, which he suspected was the law of cure. It was not difficult to conceive that a dose of a medicine destined to act on a part of the organism already affected must be very small. He reduced his doses considerably from those of ordinary practice; still he found the aggravation produced was far too great. Desirous of relieving his patients of all unnecessary suffering, he resolved to diminish the doses of each medicament, until he had determined by practice the least quantity sufficient to produce the required result. Fractions of grains were found to be still too powerful, and it became necessary to seek a method of reducing them still lower, and at length he hit upon that which afterwards led him to such truly wonderful results.

In a work like the present it would be out of place to enter into a detailed explanation of the mode in which the medicaments of Hœœopathy are prepared. Whoever is desirous of seeing the whole system laid down at full length, with directions for the treatment of each individual substance admitted into Homœopathic practice, may consult the *Pharmacopœia Homœopathica* of that highly-accomplished gentleman, Dr. F. F. Quin, which contains the fullest information on the subject. It will be sufficient to say that the greatest possible care is used to prevent the slightest admixture of any foreign ingredient, so that there may be no chance of the pure action of the simple medicine being disturbed — that each one undergoes a long process of pounding with sugar of milk — that the formulæ for the preparation of them are laid down with the greatest possible precision — and that the attenuation (or extension rather) of them is carried on to a degree which they only do not think useless, who have had an opportunity of observing their effects. \*

To those, indeed, who have been accustomed to the “rule

\* The process is to mix by pounding for an hour one grain of the medicament with 99 grains of sugar of milk; then again one grain of this mixture with 99 grains more of sugar of milk, and so on.

of thumb" preparations of Polypharmacy, the many precautions adopted, the extreme nicety and precision, the minute subdivisions, the evanescent attenuations of Homœopathy will appear tedious and frivolous, as a matter of course. Whether some of those minute regulations might or might not be dispensed with, it is not for us to say. The real meaning of all that excessive accuracy would seem to be that Hahnemann having invariably practised this mode of preparation, and having invariably found the efficacy of medicaments so prepared is naturally desirous of seeing one uniform mode adhered to. "If," we may suppose him to urge, "you will adopt the precautions I have adopted, and prepare the medicaments as I have prepared them, I will be responsible for the result, if they are properly administered. I know what medicaments so prepared will do, because I have made thousands and tens of thousands of experiments with them on all kinds of patients. But I do not know what may be the effect of medicaments otherwise prepared; they may answer the same end or they may not. I have never tried them; and I leave to others to decide on what they have not investigated, and to pronounce with certainty what will be the effect on the living organism of that which they have not submitted to many and conclusive experiments."

But, alas! it is a pity that we should have been so long accustomed to a loose off-hand ready-made sort of method of preparing medicines, that the very accuracy introduced by Hahnemann becomes one of the objections to his system, and that which should be the greatest argument in favour of Homœopathy is actually employed as an argument against it.

Had he, instead of dissipating a single grain until it is lost in infinity, and recommending that a single medicament should be employed at one time, and allowed to exhaust its action before another was prescribed; had he, instead of this, essayed to increase and multiply our doses, and confound confusion still more with more frequent exhibition of more intricate re-

cipes; had he made it one of the preliminary conditions of his mysteries, that every neophyte should renounce grains and drops and addict himself to pound weights and pint measures; even *that* proposition could not have been received with more indignation than the attempt to cure people by Homœopathic preparations. Diminish people's medicine indeed? prescribe in the nineteenth century less than was taken in the eighteenth? one would think the throne and the altar were fated to fall with the slightest reduction in the capacity of a pill-box, and that the standard ouncemeasure was a sacred heaven-descended image, on whose preservation depended the dynasty of the Guelphs and the liberties of the nation.

Notwithstanding these apprehensions of most serious consequences, should Hahnemann's attempt to heal diseases by measuring out medicine more charily than is usual, be suffered, it may be right to adduce a few arguments in favour of his method. It may be permitted to us to endeavour to shew, that, although human intellects could never have discovered a priori that such infinitely-reduced medicaments would have any perceptible action on the living organism, yet that when discovered it is not altogether irreconcilable with our previous knowledge. — A trial, however, is worth a thousand pages of argument. Homœopathy is not, like phrenology, an ingenious system which you must take on credit; here is no room for mistake; here is not one organ to compensate for the want of another; here is no benevolence to counteract destructiveness; here no long walk can, by giving an appetite, supply the deficiencies of alimentativeness. If the result of a few experiments, tried fairly, according to Hahnemann's plan, and following his directions literally, be not satisfactory, the theory is not true.

## CHAPTER VIII.

He who sees sundry grains of a certain medicine swallowed without any inconvenience, cannot bring his mind to believe

that any preparation can excite such energy in that medicine as to make a very minute fraction of a grain of it sufficient for all medical purposes. There are several circumstances, however, connected with the subject which should be previously taken into consideration, which might tend to convince us that, under Homœopathic treatment, very small doses even of unprepared medicines ought to produce effects on the organism.

In the first place, the medicines of ordinary practice are scarcely ever exhibited pure and simple; and who can tell what is the effect of mixing together substances whose properties are not completely known? The antidote is, possibly, very often taken simultaneously with the poison; camphor and opium, for instance, are found in the same recipe, the one being almost a complete antidote of the other in most of its effects. In no case, however, is it likely that any single medicament could exert all its proper action on the organism, when others are mixed with it, whose compound action must disturb, if not destroy the immediate action of any single one.

In the next place, the diet of Homœopathy is such as to preclude the possibility of any interruption from substances which exert any medicinal action. All raw vegetable juices, all spices, all essences, all odours, all perfumes, all theiform infusions, all that can by any possibility be supposed to exercise the slightest influence over the organism, are strictly and rigorously excluded; so that the pure simple medicament may have the whole control over the organism, and be at liberty to act unfettered and undisturbed; and, at the same time, all mental exertion, or any shock that can in any way interfere with or divert the action of the medicament, is scrupulously avoided. How different all this is to the smelling-salts, and camphor, and eau de Cologne, and chlorides, and hot tea, which, right or wrong, are ordinarily permitted, no one can fail to observe; nor can any one doubt that, when every interference is so carefully prevented, the one only substance which

is allowed to act must act with inconceivably more energy, than when every breath the patient draws diffuses over the system a power capable of disturbing its operation, and every mouthful swallowed admits, if not an enemy, what at least can not but be a very troublesome ally.

In the third place, the principle which animates the body rises up in rebellion against a violent attack; thus, when a large dose is administered, nature is roused to reject the intruder altogether and immediately. Hence abundant evacuations of all sorts, caused by the size of the dose, which evacuations dissipate and carry off the virtues of the medicament. Vomiting, diarrhoea, bleeding at the nose, &c., salivations, convulsions, fever, are the modes in which these violent intruders are violently expelled; while a minute dose is left to act slowly, gently, and undisturbed on the organism, and thus to produce without excitement all that kindly influence which is soon cut short, if the dose be increased, by a storm of reaction, in which all the individual and peculiar symptoms of the medicament are lost in inextricable confusion.

Lastly, we must refer once more to the principle before mentioned, namely, that the doses of Homœopathy are destined to act on that part of the organism which is already affected; while in every other system of medicine they are given with the intention of exciting a disease in a part which is perfectly sound. Let it not be thought that little stress can be laid on this practice of administering medicaments to act on an already affected part of the organism. Neither slight nor trivial is the difference between the two modes. A blow, for instance, which would inflict very little pain if a sound part of the body were struck, would cause great agony if it fell on a festering finger. You may catch a cricket-ball in a sound hand, while when it is scalded or bruised you can scarcely bear the gentlest air of a summer evening to come into contact with it. Let a horse be unhurt, and you may rub his hide with an iron curry-comb — touch but with your finger the shoulder which

has been galled by the saddle, and the poor thing will shiver from the mane to the fetlock joint. The eye that can steadfastly watch the lark half way up to heaven, when uninjured, cannot bear the irritation caused by a chamber lamp, when it is inflamed. He who can at one time hear undisturbed the crash of battle, or heaven's artillery thunder in the skies, let him lie under the power of a fever, and the lightest tread of an attendant in the sick-room, a step that could scarcely bend down the hair bell, shall suffice to kindle madness in him. Why multiply instances which all have so many opportunities of witnessing? It is abundantly clear that very little doubt ought to be entertained as to the powers of medicaments destined as they are in Homœopathic practice to act in a totally different manner from any thing that we have been hitherto accustomed to. The aggravation desired is infinitesimal, so of course should be the doses. Taking into the account all the reasons for their excessive diminution which we have here collected together, we shall certainly no longer wonder at the minute doses which experience has taught are absolutely necessary if the cure is to be gentle, and kindly, and undisturbed.

But this is not all. We have been arguing hitherto on the supposition that the mode of preparation of the Homœopathic pharmacy was the same as that adopted in ordinary practice. We have not yet mentioned the molecular friction which each medicament has to undergo previous to its final attenuation.

I remember once long ago attending a lecture with a great many others, and feeling all at once a shock go through me that jarred the very joints of my bones, and seemed as if it had struck my teeth deeper into their sockets. At the same instant of time, for we had been directed to form a continuous chain, every head in the room seemed as if struck by an invisible club, and two or three score of lusty frames were convulsed by some incontrollable force, which shook the limbs of vigorous one-and-twenty, as if they had been doing battle with three score years and ten. All this storm was conjured

up by rubbing a cylinder of glass. Will any one who knows all this (and what child does not know it) pretend to say beforehand, that it is impossible by friction to excite a force which shall act on the human organism? All we assert respecting the medicaments of Homœopathy is that some force has been excited by the treatment they have undergone, which can, and will, and does, under certain circumstances, act strongly on the dynamic principle of life.

The supposition that the dose is material has been apparently the chief source of all the disbelief in its power. Allopathy has in fact so drilled the belief of materiality into us that we are unable to conceive dynamic action. Not satisfied with doses which are certainly material enough, a material origin has been assigned to disease also, and nothing is permitted to have the power of acting on the organism, excepting that which possesses solidity and substance. But that in the preparations of Homœopathy, a peculiar and especial medicinal force is developed by friction, is rendered probable by several considerations. In the first place, many substances, such as metallic gold, metallic silver, platina, &c. when pounded for some time with a neutral excipient, acquire a very powerful action on the animal economy. Some again, as silica, charcoal, lycopodium, and more especially alumine, acquire a force, increasing with the denominator of the fraction, which expresses the degree of dispersion. The idea of division into parts is a mistake; you do not really divide the grain of medicine into 1-100ths, or 1-1000000ths; you develop a new power, and disperse it over so many consecutive portions of sugar of milk. The experiments of Korsakoff moreover seem completely to decide the question as to the materiality of the medicament. He carried the dilution through 1500 consecutive processes, so that the last contained of the medicamental substance  $\frac{1}{1500}$  of a grain, a perfectly evanescent quantity (100).

as to the *matter* of it. Yet even here the last attenuation possessed the power of acting on the human economy.

What force is developed by rubbing glass? What force is communicated by rubbing iron with a loadstone? What weight has been communicated in either of these cases? How much heavier is the magnetized iron than it was before? And through how many consecutive bars might you not carry the communication of force? How much heavier is the Leyden jar when it is charged than it was before?

Or take a piece of iron and lay it on an anvil and hammer it smartly for a short time; what additional weight have you given to it? And yet you have communicated to it a power, temporary certainly, but to be excited at pleasure, of acting most energetically on the animal economy, as any one may try who chooses to handle it.

Or rub two dry sticks together or strike a steel with a flint, or hold your finger in the focus of a burning glass, or get galvanized, before you deny the power of immaterial force to act on the human frame.

The power of minute forces or even of minute portions of matter to disturb the health of man has never yet been properly investigated. Who has not seen delicate females powerfully affected by the smell of musk? Who has not seen some who cannot bear strong scents? What is it in the smell of paint which affects a whole household with sickness? What is it that gives the painter's cholic? It would be easy to adduce many similar examples if this were the proper place for them. Let those who doubt read, amongst other things, the Gulstonian Lectures for 1834, by Dr. George Burrows,\* from which

\* There are some remarks on Homœopathy in these lectures by Dr. Burrows which must not be passed over without notice. After having asserted that the Homœopathic doctrines of Hahnemann have been *at once rejected as absurd* by practitioners in this country (*what without any enquiry at all*, Dr. Burrows? They surely *dare* not trifle thus with lives) on account of the impossibility of any efficacy in the minute doses recommended by that physician, he ventures to hint that "the theory of Hahnemann cannot be regarded so visionary as it appears at first sight," and proceeds to clear himself immediately from even the bare suspicion of being an Homœopathist. Now I ask this gentleman, why, instead of talking and arguing about the matter, he



the following instance of the power of minute doses is taken. "M. Vernière poisoned an animal with the *nux vomica*, and having taken a portion of its blood, he injected it into the veins of another animal, which perished with the usual effects of that poison." What quantity of matter is it which taken on the point of a lancet from a patient suffering under the small pox will rouse into violent action the whole organism of the strongest person who is but pricked with it? What is the weight of the venom which runs down the rattle-snake's fang and rapidly extinguishes life? How many ounces or drachms are poured into the circulation when the mad dog's tooth razes the cuticle, and throws sinews of iron and thews of brass into horrible convulsions, until death puts a stop to the misery of the poor sufferer? \* I have seen one or two cases wherein Homœopathy has not produced the expected benefit. Who wonders at it? The science is in its infancy, and no one tries its powers, excepting those who having previously tried every thing else can get no relief. No one comes to it until he despairs of cure. I have also seen one case in which the doses of Homœopathy were not felt. But I have seen *Lycopodium X.* produce effects too strong to be mistaken, especially on the 'moral.' I have seen *Nux Vom.* at one of the last attenuations, redden the external angle of the left eye (*Vid.*

did not settle the question at once, by taking himself some of Hahnemann's preparations? Is it by *words* that these matters are to be decided? He acknowledges that he saw the system tried in 1828, and yet in 1834 he has only to "think," and "suppose" about the power of the minute doses? Is this the way in which enlightened physicians pronounce on the truth or falsehood of systems?

*Pudet hæc opprobria nobis.*

*Et dici potuisse et non potuisse refelli.*

But truly delighted I am to read such words as these, — "These observations may therefore render it probable that much smaller doses than practitioners in general are in the habit of employing in this country, when administered judiciously, may produce effects far beyond what is commonly believed." Thus much at least we owe to Hahnemann. It will not be many years perhaps before the whole of his splendid truths are acknowledged. At present the immovable "Baconian principles," of great doses are, it seems, about to give place to the no less Baconian principles which prove great doses unnecessary.

\* It must not be forgotten that the medicines of Homœopathy are laid on the tongue and left in contact with the nerves of the papillæ, instead of being swallowed. In all probability this mode of affecting the system is much more efficacious than the latter.

Mat. Med. Symp. 137). I have seen Conium, under the same circumstances, increase the sense of smell so as to render a well stopped bottle of lavender water very perceptible in the room. I have seen Belladonna X. fill the left cheek with the deep red blotches so peculiar to it, and this over and over again (it was given as a prophylactic); and in these, and many other cases, the patients had not the slightest idea of what they were taking. I have taken the Homœopathic preparations myself, both in sickness and for the sake of experiment when in perfect health many times. I have *felt* Belladonna X. aggravate an ulcer severely. I have felt Thuja X. excite very disagreeable symptoms. I have watched the effects of Nitric Acid X. and observed its consecutive effects beyond the time mentioned in the *Materia Medica*. I have tried the preparations at all times, and under all circumstances of sickness and health, sometimes when I did not know what I took, sometimes when I did know, sometimes when I had no idea of the peculiar pathogenetic action, and sometimes when I had studied it before hand in the *Materia Medica*, and I am at this moment suffering under the action of two Globules Dulcamara II. taken for amusement. It is beautiful, and well worth the suffering, to watch the characteristic symptoms of a medicament appearing one after another, distinct, and clear, and decisive, and after a while retiring and leaving the organism perfectly free from the slightest trace of the little storm which had been passing over it,—to mark the extreme accuracy of the descriptions of Hahnemann, and at times to experience new sensations which have escaped him.

But why mention all this? Who will believe me? They will not believe Hahnemann himself. How should I expect to be believed? He who is unable to perceive the light of the sun at broad noon is not likely to detect the faint glimmer of an humble satellite.

### CONCLUSION.

I have been told that this ephemeral production will excite

the indignation of the medical profession. If by indignation be meant a determination to put down by experiments such a mere “picker up of crumbs” as the writer, and to prove that whatever Homœopathy may be on paper it fails in practice, then sincerely do I hope that this book of humble pretensions, and yet humbler execution, may excite that feeling. Alas! I fear it will excite no such thing. It will fall into the hands of few—and in those few it will awaken dignified contempt, or the pity which palmy science vouchsafes to benighted ignorance. The millennium of a good practice requires a ruder shock to disturb it than can be given by the mere brutum fulmen of words.

Yet in case there should be those who feel sufficient interest in this trifle to get angry with it, I will take the liberty of addressing to such a few words ere my task be done and my theme die into an echo.

Who has not visited some splendid emporium of jewelry—Hamlet’s, for instance, or Rundell’s, where magnificence seems cradled as if in her own peculiar home! Heaped around in prodigal confusion lie fretted gold and bossed silver, chased chalices, burnished urns that outshine the sun—

Wedges of gold,—heaps of pearl,  
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,  
All scattered—

Amidst them all stands some mere journeyman, engaged in unpacking the gorgeous treasures, and ranging along the counter such as he deems most striking. It is possible his unpractised eye may neglect some which would be in reality more captivating than what he produces—it is possible he may so far mistake as to expose one or two pieces of mere tinsel—it is also possible that he may crack or injure in the handling some of the most precious. Speak lightly of his errors—*tenues grandia*—he is but a journeyman.

And now, gentlemen, how would you be benefitted if, like Harmodius, you were to conceal your clubs in wreaths of

flowers culled from the smiling Eden of the Seven Dials, and knock down the writer of these pages? The only natural result of getting rid of King Log, is to get King Stork in his place; and some will not scruple to say, that if the medical men had made any experiments, they would surely put down gainsayers by publishing them, rather than by any other means.

The persecuting druggists of Leipzig who awakened against Hahnemann an old slumbering law which guaranteed to them the monopoly of drugs, forgot, like other druggists, the reaction of the organism. They had ill read history, these blunderers! and still worse had they studied the mind of men. They knew not that there is a moral elasticity—a power of resistance that is only the more roused into action by these royal reasons. They knew not that error can never grow until it is thickly manured with the rotted filth of abuse. Whose blood so chilled with frosty indifference, that it does not boil at the attempts made to smother in dirt him whom reason could not confute? Whose eye does not kindle, whose heart does not knock against its cage, when the indomitable old man is sent forth to bare his white head before a foreign throne, and beg an asylum against those whose wretched gains would have been shorn if truth were permitted to stand? Who can see Hornburg refused his doctor's degree, and, worn out with relentless virulence, sink into an early tomb, in hopes of finding there that rest denied him here, without feeling himself choked with thick-coming indignation? I do thank God most heartily for this one pure flame, which, like a lamp in a sepulchre, burns ever brightly amidst the corruption of human nature for this one gallant and chivalrous feeling which prompts even the bedridden to side with the oppressed. In Albion, at least, there is not a stone that would not cry out of the wall, or a beam in the timber that would hold its peace, at an instance of oppression.

If Homœopathy be an error, they of Brunswick and they

of Leipzig have sent it over the world, as if the dun deer's hide had been bound on the feet of the messenger. And if you, gentlemen, would make it prosper here faster than it ought to do, only use personalities instead of arguments, and ere long you will find the shadow of it glooming on your own hearth-stone. But if you are really desirous of putting it down, permit me to furnish you with a sword of etherial temper, before whose edge no error can stand—the only weapon which will effect the end you wish.

“You have it in your power to give Homœopathy her death blow. Take cases of disease one after another—describe them according to the instructions given in the *Organon*—paint the totality of the perceptible symptoms of each so well that the author of Homœopathy himself could not complain of the want of precision in the picture—and (supposing that these are cases whose symptoms are found among the reason pathogenetic effects of any of those medicaments already tried) choose that medicament which, homœopathically speaking, is best suited to each case; give it alone, uncompounded, in such weak doses (so prepared) as the doctrine prescribes, keeping the patients carefully out of the reach of every medicinal influence; and if the diseases be not cured quickly, gently, and permanently, relate the whole number of cases, and cover Homœopathy with disgrace, by proclaiming the want of success of treatment adopted rigorously after its principles.”\* Until this be done, you must not wonder if men of all sorts delight to gird at you, and even such an one as I am take up a taunting parable against you.

The tone of these remarks may after all be wrong. Warm feelings will vent themselves in warm expressions. Enthusiasm is with difficulty bitted and bridled. Ignorance, more especially, kindled by zeal, is wilder than the wild ass's colt: and it is possible that these pages may furnish abundant evidence of the truth of the assertion. If any one of them, how-

\* Vid. *Mat. Med.*

ever, contains a line unbecoming a gentleman, or a thought unsuited to a Christian, the writer of it would be the first to tear it out if he knew which was defiled by them. Not thus is the dignity of science sustained. Not thus is the cause of truth advanced. If he has endeavoured to make more widely known that which he believes to be true, he cannot think the intention is deserving of blame, however inadequate the execution. If he believes that there is a perfect specific for the cholera, for instance, ought he to keep silence, when every death that has been caused by it is nothing else than pure homicide, if Homœopathy be true? Ought he to hear medical men professing fairly their inability to deal with the destroyer and yet keep silence? Ought he again to see case after case of various diseases happening under his own eye — those cured whom even affection had ceased to hope for — and yet keep silence? Ought he to mark the light of a great blessing gilding the rivers and plains of Germany, quivering on the hill-tops of France and Italy, reflected to the banks of the Hudson, and purifying even the marshes of Surinam, and beautiful England *alone* overshadowed — the white cliffs of England *alone* lying in the darkness of the valley of the shadow of death, and *yet keep silence*?

Let it be forgiven him, if he expresses a doubt whether medical men in general are properly sensible of the dignity of the office they have undertaken. How proudly ought he to hold his head, who has bent his energies of mind and body to diminish suffering, and who shall be put in competition with him? Tell us not of names and titles, stars and ribands, the mere gold-dust with which man loves to spangle mortality, in order to hide its true complexion — talk not to us of the silken drones who waste their sickly lives in the sleek toil of living — refer us not to the crooked knaveries of little great men, pawning duties in life and hopes in death, to become less greater men by a ball on the coronet or a belt round the knee. He who would see man on his noblest errand — man, on

whom the spirits of the wise as they sit in the clouds might condescend to gaze without mocking us, must follow the Man of Healing on his daily rounds. Glitter and gilding, satin draperies, and intertissued robes of gold and pearl—pride, spanieled to the heels by servile insolence or lackeyed by knee-crooking slaves, who would rather feed in the dust on scraps and orts than wrap themselves in virtue and stand upright—how should “kindly dews” fall on such nothingness as this? But the stars in their courses might well rain doubly sacred influence on him whose business it is to restore health—whose daily bread is won by dispensing happiness. March on in proud humility, Vicegerent of Blessing, for sure an approving smile must gild the onward path of him whose brother was “sick and he visited him.” If a grateful nation garlanded with oak the brows of him who saved a citizen, of what civic crown should he be thought worthy whose life is a career of such actions?

But never be it forgotten that if the charge of the health of his fellow creature be thus noble, it is at the same time one of the most solemn, with one only exception, the most solemn duty that man can undertake. Before it most of the ordinary duties and offices of life fade into insignificance. “The Vicar of the All-powerful to create anew to a certain extent the existence of his fellow-creature destroyed by disease,” or if we shrink from the energy of Hahnemann’s language; charged by his Maker with the superintendence and right use of those means which he has provided to alter, modify and amend the jarring movements of the human frame, it is no ordinary responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the physician. On the accuracy of his knowledge and on the correctness of his principles depend perhaps a father’s happiness, a mother’s hopes, the support of infants, the enjoyment of a wide circle, the prosperity of a neighbourhood, the liberties of a people perhaps, perhaps the peace of the world; yea, haply the opportunity of repentance. If such a man so loaded with oner-

ous duties, with such grave responsibilities, and such solemn consequences depending on him were well aware of the nature of his office, he would shrink from the notion that he had already exhausted all information on the subject of healing; he would doubt his own powers: he would distrust his own judgment; he would weary Heaven with prayers for light and knowledge; he would deem it criminal to waste in indolent acquiescence an hour that might have been employed in investigation, and a sin against the Majesty of heaven to reject one single assertion connected with the science of healing, until he had convinced himself by actual trial of its falsehood. The four winds would bring him tidings of all new discovered simples; and not a finger-ache could be cured above the line of perpetual snow, but, like Fine-ear in the tale, he would catch the whisper of it along the earth.

But woe trice-doubled to him who is wise in his own eyes; who knowing that a perfect and complete system claims attention on account of the multitude of its cures, a system embraced by hundreds, and beautiful all over with the blessings of thousands, dares to quoit it down stairs like a shove-groat shilling, in perfect ignorance of its real nature, because he is *convinced* that it cannot be true, or because it would cost some trouble to enquire into it. Be a far lower deep and a far darker shade of infamy, the portion of that Merchant of miseries who would delay enquiry, because, if it proved true, he might fall short of some of those rascal counters with which Agony fees his unwholesome palm. Cleave the leprosy of Gehazi for ever to him who would sell the mighty space of his large honours for as much trash as may be grasped thus. But there is no such man; Kind heaven forbid it! lest the curse of Cain once more affright the world!

Let us plead more gently; if any one single truth lurks in the voluminous writings of Hahnemann, if any one specific has really been discovered by him, how will the really honourable and noble profession of medicine reconcile it to their



consciences, that they have delayed to study and practise it? Surely this alone would be a charge to which no right feeling man, certainly no Christian, would choose to plead guilty?

But put the case awhile that Homœopathy is true. It is an idle hypothesis, but let it stand, and let there stand by the side of it another hypothesis, that there are certain men, honourable, upright, honest, humane, merciful, kind-hearted, religious men, men of genius and reputation; men of character and credit, who, though charged with the care of the health of their brethren, were so obstinately wedded to the theories they had been bred up in, that they despised information, denied the truth, kicked at instruction, stopped their ears and closed their eyes, and answering enquiry by abuse, persevered in their old system unmoved. Well, reasoning upon our idle hypothesis, every patient these gentlemen have treated has been treated erroneously. Who then, permit us to ask, is responsible for all the consequent suffering? who for the death of those that have died?

They are bold men who do not fear to burden themselves with so tremendous a risk, a risk which a few carefully-made experiments would have totally got rid of. How easy for some leading man\* to have made those experiments. How easy to have tried Homœopathy fairly and honestly, not rushing, like Andral, into the very heart of a most difficult science (of a science, be it said under favour, far more intricate, far more difficult, than the old system), which he had not studied, and making experiments on cases where the most experienced Homœopath would have required much consideration, which made as they were could only terminate in one way; but commencing with the simplest cases, first of all trying on himself the Homœopathic preparations, and then passing on to cases where the choice of the medicament was not dubious; experiments, in fact, like those of Kopp, made with caution, reserve, and candor, by one neither an opponent nor a partizan; unconvinced, but open to conviction. *Here*, he would say, Ho-

mceopathy succeeded; *there* it failed. In this instance its effects were marvellous; in that they did not exceed the old system. On the nervous and sensitive it is all that can be desired; on the phlegmatic its action is not so perfect.

Then, indeed, the reproach that hangs over us would have been swept away. Truth would have lifted her glorious head above the clouds. Humanity would have gained, and the profession would have deserved and acquired fresh confidence and increasing respect; the "ignotum" would not have been mystified into the "magnificum," and never would the presumptuous step of an intruder have dared to desecrate the vestibule of the temple of Esculapius if thus centinelled by Vigilance. Then, indeed, we should have lost one of our most plausible arguments, *that no experiments have been given because none can be given.*

The pamphlet originally intended has swelled into a volume. May its motive excuse its feebleness. That's in good truth a perilous shot out of a popgun that a poor and private displeasure can do against a whole profession of men of genius! I might as well go about to turn the sun to ice, with fanning in his face with a peacock's feather! But though this is but the slight ripple spilt upon the beach, let it be a warning that far out at sea the waters are heaving with the storm. The groundswell is rolling majestically on in gloomy grandeur. The full tide is coming in, and, horsed by the Spirit of the Tempest, the tenth wave of Medical Improvement will ere long lift its threatening crest, and pour its flood of waters at the feet of those who would set bars and doors to it, and say, *Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.*

And let us pray that come it may,  
As *come it will* for all that!

Sincerely do I entreat pardon of any whom these slight pages may have offended. With convictions like mine, it is not easy to dip the pen in milk and honey; and he who would

not kindle with such a theme is troubled with few of the sympathies of human nature. I believed, and *therefore* have I spoken. Would only that the sincerity of that belief may convince the profession that, right or wrong, Homœopathy has pervaded the whole of society, is throbbing in the extremities as well as at the heart, is curling the stream as well as crisping the fountain. The lighter the straw the better does it answer the purpose of shewing which way the wind blows. Nor will even this attempt be destitute of value, if medical men shall look on it as a mere.

“Weed torn from the rock on ocean’s foam to sail,”

as a mere bubble borne on the tide of opinion, but, nevertheless, serving as well as if it were of solider materials to indicate to what point that tide is setting.

